

DOOR-TO-DOOR EVANGELISM: A CASE STUDY IN HENRICO, VA

A THESIS-PROJECT

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To my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, who has saved me in this present life and from the wrath to come: A debt that I can never repay, but I will endeavor to reduce it.

Love your neighbors by getting them saved.
—James Dabney, my evangelistic theme

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ABSTRACT

Some authors assert that door-to-door evangelism is not the optimal way to evangelize. For the most part, they feel as though door-to-door evangelism has been anachronistically abrogated. They argue that advertisement, telephone solicitation, and direct mail are more useful than door-to-door evangelism. This thesis-project has explored their assertions by conducting surveys in Henrico County, VA and has discovered usefulness in door-to-door evangelism in this context. The results may be significant to other ministerial contexts. Other ministerial context may also find usefulness in door-to-door evangelism, especially when other ministries who may not have enough financial resources to engage in other expensive evangelism.

CHAPTER ONE

THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

In writing about traditional outreach, Thomas Rainer says, “If we read much of the literature on church growth, we must register some surprise at the number of churches that told us this methodology was one of their most effective evangelistic tools. In-home visitation, we have been told by many authorities, is waning or ineffective.”¹ Rainer makes a cogent argument here: just because some authors say that door-to-door evangelism² is ineffective, does not mean that is necessarily the case. The effectiveness of door-to-door evangelism should not be based upon hearsay; rather it should be based upon the implementation of actual experiences and the will of God. After all, it is God who determines the effectiveness of door-to-door evangelism—not man.³ God also determines the extent of evangelism by commanding believers to evangelize every creature.⁴ Since God commands reaching every creature with the gospel, will door-to-door evangelism be an effective way to evangelize every creature?

According to one particular research study, there are more non-Christians than

¹ Thomas Rainer, *Effective Evangelistic Churches: Successful Churches Reveal What Works and What Doesn't* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996), 41.

² There are various door-to-door evangelisms. What I mean about door-to-door evangelism, I mean unannounced or stranger door-to-door evangelism.

³ 1 Corinthians 3:6.

⁴ Mark 16:15. When I refer to the word, “evangelize,” I am not talking about sharing the gospel only: I am also trying to ascertain the legitimacy of one’s faith based upon inquiry.

Christians living in the United States.⁵ The Barna Group reports that in 2002, there were approximately 180 to 190 million people living in the United States, and out of that number, there were 90 to 100 million people who were unchurched.⁶ Since then, the numbers of the unchurched has proliferated significantly. In 2014, there were 114 million people who were reported as churchless⁷—if we append another 42 million youths,⁸ then there were 156 million churchless people in the United States. Similarly, Thomas Rainer’s report resembles Barna’s report—but it is not identical. Rainer’s research indicates that there were 160 million unchurched people in the United States.⁹ In looking at the closeness of both reporting figures, it is logical to conclude that the findings of both research groups are congruent, giving us confidence in their accuracies. In view of both of these accounts, there are enough unchurched people in the United States to make an entire nation of non-Christians.¹⁰ How can evangelists reach them? How can evangelists tell every soul about the grace and mercy of Jesus Christ—is door-to-door evangelism an effective way? One person or church cannot reach all people, but all churches can reach all people: through the proven success of door-to-door

⁵Phil Shawchuck, *Marketing for Congregations: Choosing to Serve People More Effectively* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1992), 26.

⁶Barna Group, *Grow Your Church from the Outside In: Understanding the Unchurched and How to Reach Them*. (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2002), 22-23.

⁷Barna Group, *Churchless: Understanding Today's Unchurched and How to Connect with Them* (Austin, TX: Tyndale Momentum, 2014), 566-568, Kindle.

⁸Barna Group, *Churchless*, 555-558.

⁹Thomas Rainer, *The Unchurched Next Door: Understanding Faith Stages as Keys to Sharing Your Faith* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 643-644, Kindle.

¹⁰Barna Group, *Churchless*, 555-560, Kindle.

evangelism. The whole idea of this project design is not merely that one church may grow through door-to-door evangelism—but that all churches may grow through the enterprise of door-to-door evangelism through this one church. Once churches see one church succeed through door-to-door evangelism, then they will want to engage in the same enterprise.

The Barna Group reports that 8% of born-again Christians did not attend church in 2002. But, in 2014, the figure had doubled to 16%.¹¹ This finding is alarming to some pastors because they believe that without divine fellowship and spiritual interaction it is impossible to be saved.¹² This could possibly mean that the respondents to the survey did not understand the biblical foundations for the vital importance of attending the church. There is a way to ascertain the authenticity of faith by evaluating the constructions of individual lives. We need to ascertain whether they are building on the rock of Christ or are building on sinking sand. Once we find out about the faith of individuals, then that knowledge will help to reveal how to we can serve everyone spiritually. It is essential to know the strengths and weaknesses of every individual, “for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, [and] to the building up of the body of Christ” (Ephes. 4:12). Not only do we need to know where they stand in their Christian faith, but they need to know what they are standing on: the rock or sinking sand (Matt. 7:24-27).

We now have 42 million churchless youths in the United States. The Barna

¹¹Barna Group, *Churchless*, 1201-1202, Kindle.

¹²Barna Group, *Churchless*, 1194-1195, Kindle.

Research Group blames the increase on knowledge, self-indulgence, technology, and social media. In 2002, 18% of the total skeptic population was 30 years old and younger.¹³ Since then, the national population of skeptics has almost doubled to 34%.¹⁴ One-third of those skeptics were college graduates, and now the trend has jumped to one-half.¹⁵ However, despite these statistics, the skeptics of the church are somehow still connected to the Christian faith.¹⁶ The question that needs to be answered is: are they truly born-again Christians or are they compromisers? Today's youths across our nation are enjoying the new taste of big screen televisions and irresistible social media. They even have voracious appetites for online gaming.¹⁷ The truth of the matter is that these technological entertainments are difficult to resist. To make matters worse, 31% of the youths think that the church is unnecessary.¹⁸ Evangelists must understand the minds of the unchurched, if they are to reach them. Young people make everyday choices between right and wrong; what feels good and what feels bad; what is boring and what is exciting.

For example, they have to choose between the boredom of church services and

¹³ Barna Group, *Churchless*, 555-560, Kindle.

¹⁴"2015 State of Atheism in America," March 25, 2015, accessed August 27, 2015, <https://www.BarnaGroup.org/BarnaGroup-update/culture/713-2015-state-of-atheism-in-america#.Vd-QGHjEPdk>.

¹⁵"2015 State of Atheism," March 25, 2015.

¹⁶"2015 State of Atheism," March 25, 2015.

¹⁷Barna Group, *Churchless*, 271-279, Kindle.

¹⁸Barna Group, *Churchless*, 271-279, Kindle.

the reading of a complicated Bible—and more exciting irresistible technologies, such as online gaming, or social interactions from Facebook or Twitter. If they choose the latter, it is no wonder that kids are not interested in attending churches, reading their Bibles, and finding out about God. Social media has the propensity to interact with what kids like to do and desire to have. This is what makes it so stimulating. And to make matters worse, there are atheists like Richard Dawkins and Christopher Hitchens who are confusing the body of Christ with their atheistic skepticism.¹⁹ Richard Dawkins and Christopher Hitchens are dispensing their toxic atheism by the megadose through social media like YouTube. They are not only affecting our nation as a whole, but also affecting local places. From new technologies and from the toxic atheism of Dawkins and Hitchens young people are dropping out of churches fast. One way of reversing this trend is through door-to-door evangelism. Door-to-door evangelism can ascertain where youths are individually in their Christian lives and thereby equip them with the spiritual edification, training, and development necessary to prevent them from stumbling in their spiritual walk.

There is a grave unchurched problem nationally, but there is also a grave unchurched problem locally. I know this is true because I discovered this unchurched problem at my home church: Mount Olive Baptist Church, in Manakin Virginia. There were many people living around the church, but there were not many in the church.

For example, in the Richmond/Petersburg area, we have 77,000 males and

¹⁹Barna Group, *Churchless*, 1334-1337, Kindle.

116,000 females who are the unchurched.²⁰ There are 29,000 unchurched people between the ages of 18 and 30 living in the R/P area.²¹ Forty-eight thousand people are between the ages of 31 and 49, and 62,000 are between 50 and 68 years old. There are 54,000 unchurched people who are 69 years and older.²² The bottom line is that the R/P area has “low Christianized”²³ communities with 107,000 households, and “low secularized”²⁴ communities with 342,000 households. Both of these household segments are potential communities to evangelize. When factoring in the 107,000 households of the “low secularized” who are not totally committed to secularization, and the “low Christianized” households who are not totally committed to Christianization—we then have lukewarm Christians (Rev. 3:16); the Barna Group calls this notional Christians. The Barna Group says that there are notional Christians who are the church and there are notional Christians who are the unchurched. Notional Christians identify themselves as Christian, but do not meet the born again²⁵ criteria. In other words, there are professing Christians who claim that they are Christians, but their

²⁰Barna Group, “Richmond/Petersburg, VA: City Report” (2015): 21.

²¹Barna Group, “Richmond/Petersburg, VA: City Report” (2015): 21.

²²Barna Group, “Richmond/Petersburg, VA: City Report” (2015): 21.

²³The “low Christianized” is the selection where respondents have chosen 10 or less Christian characteristics or attributes on a given list. In other words, these people are lukewarm Christians.

²⁴The “low secularized” is the selection where respondents have chosen less than 10 secular characteristics or attributes on a given list. In other words, these people are barely secularists.

²⁵ Barna Group, “Richmond/Petersburg, VA: City Report” (2015): 21. “People who are born again say they have made a personal commitment to Jesus Christ that is still important in their life today and believe that, when they die, they will go to heaven because they have confessed their sins and accepted Jesus as their savior.”

hearts are not changed and they have not received a spiritual transformation by trusting in Christ's words.

Some might even think that if they will not give their all as Christians, then they probably are not Christians at all. For the church, the Barna Group lists 82,000 households who are notional Christians, and for the unchurched the Barna Group lists 81,000 households who are notional Christians. In looking at the Barna Group 2015 City Report, we can see more vividly and comprehend more easily by observing the different graphic descriptions:

ACTIVITY & RELIGIOUS BEHAVIOR				
Church Attendance	Pop. % ²⁵	Index ²⁶	HH Size ²⁷	US% ²⁸
	(000)			
Churches	66 ²⁹	106	370	62
very active (weekly)	45	107	252	42
somewhat active (monthly)	11	100	62	11
minimally active (past 6 months)	10	111	56	9
Unchurched	34 ³⁰	89	190	38
de-churched (not in past 6 months)	30	103	168	29
never churched	5	56	28	9

Figure 1. Church Attendance

In the church attendance section, it shows that out of 370,000 households of the church in the R/P area, there are 190,000 unchurched households.²⁶ This means that 66% of the total population is church, and 34% of the total population is unchurched.²⁷ If we want to see how the 34% rates compare to the national average, then the index is our go-to section. To determine the meaning of a given index, we have to understand this concept. The number 100 represents the average number of our nation. If the number is more than 100, then the given figure is above the national average. If the number is less than 100, then the given figure is below the national average.²⁸ Since the index is 89, this means that the unchurched of the R/P area is 11 points below our national average. In a way, this is good in comparison to our national average—but then again, this is bad. The good is that we are below our national average. The bad is that there are many unchurched people who need to be evangelized. Door-to-door evangelism can solve this problem. There are 190,000 people who are unchurched. This is more than half of the church in the R/P area. There is a great need to evangelize these households through door-to-door evangelism, so there can be a reduction of the total number of unchurched who need to be evangelized.

Conversely, in the church section of the church attendance, we have 370,000

²⁶Multiply by 1,000 for total number of households.

²⁷ Barna Group, “Richmond/Petersburg, VA: City Report” (2015): 18.

²⁸Barna Group, “Richmond/Petersburg, VA: City Report” (2015): 18.

households who were classified as the churched.²⁹ Only 252 households of 370,000 are actively coming to church on a weekly basis, the remainder is “somewhat active” or “minimally active.” In terms of percentages, 66 % actively attend churches, which is 4% above our national average of 62%.³⁰ In looking at the index section, the churched of the R/P area exceeds the national average by 6 points. However, if we look at the numbers once again we still have 190,000 households who do not attend churches at all.³¹ These people can be evangelized by door-to-door evangelism.

Market Size: 559,980
ACTIVITY & RELIGIOUS BEHAVIOR

Faith Engagement (past week).....	Pop. %	Index (000)	HH Size	US%
Pray to God	89	110	498	81
Read the Bible	49	123	274	40
Volunteer at church	16	84	90	19
Volunteer at non-profit	24	126	134	19
Attend adult Sunday school	23	128	129	18
Attend small group	26	144	146	18

Figure 2. Faith Engagement

The Barna Group calls this section the Faith Engagement section, but I like to refer to this section as the discipleship section. The Faith Engagement section has most of the components of discipleship. It shows prayer, reading, volunteering, small group, and attending Sunday school. The index (110) shows praying to God as being above the

²⁹Barna Group, “Richmond/Petersburg, VA: City Report” (2015): 18.

³⁰Barna Group, “Richmond/Petersburg, VA: City Report” (2015): 18.

national average. In fact, we are above the national average on every engagement except “volunteering at church” (90,000 HH). In the “praying to God” section—which towers above the rest—we have 498,000 households that pray to God in the R/P area. These statistics show that households are asking from God, but by looking at their engagement figures they are not working for God. For example, 146,000 households attend small group and 274,000 households read the Bible but 90,000 households volunteer at church and 129,000 households attend adult Sunday school. By looking at all of the 498,000 households that pray to God, in comparison to all those who volunteered to work for God, it is reasonable to conclude that most people are trying to get from God rather than giving to God. God has given his people enough. If he deems not to give his people anything more, then he has still given them enough. The truth of the matter is that God’s people should examine their commitment to God. They should ask themselves: “have we given God anything of significance or importance? Have we sacrificed our very lives to God?” It is time to give back to God. It is time to do for God. Door-to-door evangelism can help people to accomplish this spiritual enterprise. This concept should be communicated in congregational meetings and Bible classes. Somehow, there must be an emphasis in expressing the importance of volunteerism in congregations. All of God’s people should participate in evangelizing the world.

FAITH IDENTITY & ALLEGIANCE

Commitment to Christianity	Pop.%	Index (000)	HH Size	US%
Absolutely committed	65	118	309	62
Moderately committed	32	91	152	35
Not too/ not at all committed	03	30	14	10
*among self-identified Christians				

Figure 3. Commitment to Christianity

Out of 309,000 households, we have 65% of the population in the R/P area who are “absolutely committed” Christians. The “not too/ not at all committed” has only a 3 % rate. At least, the “moderately committed” is almost half of the percentage rate of “absolutely committed.” The Barna Group lists 309,000 households who are “absolutely committed,” the “moderately committed” comes in with 152,000 households, and the “not too/ not at all committed,” comes in with 14,000. The index (118) of the “absolutely committed” Christians is above the national norm (18), but the “moderately committed” is below the norm (9), and the “not too/ not at all committed” has plummeted to 30 points, which is 70 points below the national norm. The goal is to get the “not too/ not at all committed” or 14,000 people to be “absolutely committed” Christians. An emphasis on evangelistic didacticism and suggested biblical training such as discipleship will probably offset the “not too/ not at all committed” low number to a more favorable number that is more pleasing to God.

FAITH VIEWS & BELIEFS

Commitment to Jesus Christ	Pop. %	Index	HH Size (000)	US%
Have personal commitment	80	118	448	68
No personal relationship	20	63	112	32

Figure 4. Commitment to Jesus Christ

“Commitment to Jesus Christ” is an important category that helps to determine how many people in my area have made a personal commitment to Jesus Christ. The report shows that 112,000 households need to be convinced and commit themselves to having a personal relationship with Christ. To have a personal relationship with Christ means to be practically obedient, and not having a personal relationship with Christ means to be impractically disobedient.³² In this case, 20% of the population has no relationship—or in other words, 112,000 households are on their way to hell without social intervention. This falls short of 37 points below the national average index of 100. The average national percent is 32, which means that the R/P area has 20%, which is a 12 percent differential. The bottom line is that we have 112,000 people in the R/P area who need to be reached, and the way that we can get reach them is through door-to-door evangelism.

³² Matthew 7:21-22.

FAITH VIEWS & BELIEFS

Responsibility to Evangelize	Pop. %	Index	HH Size (000)	US%
Agree strongly	35	121	196	29
Total agree	56	114	314	49
Disagree strongly	25	83	140	30
Total disagree	43	88	241	49

Figure 5. Responsibility to Evangelize

In this segment, we have 196,000 households who “agree strongly.” The respondents say that it is Christians’ responsibility to evangelize their faith. On one hand, 314,000 people selected “total agree” as their preferred choice. On, the other hand, 140,000 “disagree strongly” and 241,000 selected “total disagree.” The majority has chosen that it is a Christian responsibility to evangelize. In a sense, this is great news. If those who are in agreement with the responsibility of Christians to evangelize, then they will need less convincing than those Christians who are in disagreement with Christians’ responsibility to evangelize. If churches are to grow, then all Christians are needed to participate in the enterprise of evangelism: both those who are in agreement and those who are in disagreement. Those who disagree must be shown how they are in disagreement with and in violation of biblical principles and precepts of Christians’ duty to evangelize, so they can come to the terms of agreement and thereby be participants of the evangelistic team.

The good news is that in the United States there are 17 million unchurched people who are highly susceptible for someone to share the gospel with them.³³ Then, we have 43 million unchurched who are moderately susceptible to hear the gospel and open to an invitation to the church.³⁴ Last, but not least, we have low susceptibility, which accounts for 56 million of the unchurched. These people are neutral: they can go either way, but they will listen to the sharing of the gospel if it is presented. Rainer is highly convinced that more than 83% will attend church services, if someone will invite them.³⁵ Out of 160 million people, we have 106 million who are willing to hear the gospel. More than half of the unchurched have a high to moderate possibility of becoming the church. So, why are Christians not evangelizing them?

This project will examine four aspects of door-to-door evangelism:

1. Door-to-door evangelism is a way to establish contact between the church and the unchurched.
2. Door-to-door evangelism is an effective way to evangelize every creature.
3. Door-to-door evangelism is a way to show the unchurched how much we really care for their spiritual well-being.

The purpose of this thesis-project is to determine if door-to-door evangelism is a viable way to evangelize every creature. Door-to-door evangelism is not the only mean of evangelizing every creature. For this reason, I will explore other means (telephone, direct mail, and advertisement) of evangelization by conducting surveys in my ministry context in Henrico, VA. If somehow door-to-door evangelism does not yield favorable

³³Thomas Rainer, *The Unchurched Next Door*, 648-649, Kindle.

³⁴Thomas Rainer, *The Unchurched Next Door*, 648-649, Kindle.

³⁵Thomas Rainer, *The Unchurched Next Door*, 2169, Kindle.

results, then perhaps this project will find another way to evangelize every creature.

One of the ways, I can determine what is the effective method to evangelize every creature is to solicit help from residents whom were surveyed. Perhaps, residents will know a way or multiple ways of evangelizing every creature. I will be exploring this ideology in the remaining chapters of my thesis-project.

CHAPTER TWO

THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Before I consider Luke's rendition of Luke 10:21, it is important to discuss its backdrop in two passages of scripture. Luke 9:51–56 explicates the pending arrival of Jesus to Jerusalem and how he sends his disciples before him to prepare the way for his arrival, and Luke 9:57–62 explains the radical requirements of discipleship.¹ From reading these two excerpts, it is obvious that Jesus did not want his followers to carry an unnecessary and excessive burden of weight. To be followers of Jesus, they were instructed to lessen their loads and to not look back to the cares of this world. If they looked back, they would be deemed unfit for kingdom building. The insincere were unwanted and jettisoned, but the sincere were needed and salvaged for building the kingdom of God.¹

The long road ahead of them was dusty, burdensome, dangerous, and unpredictable. To endure the perilous possibilities, their expedition required spiritual agility and unwavering devotion. Luke does not give us a graphic account of their imminent peril, but he does record that Jesus stated: "I send you out as lambs among wolves."² While Luke also does not record any perils encountered by the Twelve, Matthew succinctly records a graphic account in Matthew 10: 16-19:

Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; so be shrewd as serpents and innocent as doves. But beware of men, for they will hand you over to the

¹ Luke 9:61.

² Luke 10:3.

courts and scourge you in their synagogues; and you will even be brought before governors and kings for my sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. But when they hand you over, do not worry about how or what you are to say; for it will be given you in that hour what you are to say. For it is not you who speak, but it is the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you. Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death. You will be hated by all because of My name, but it is the one who has endured to the end who will be saved. But whenever they persecute you in one city, flee to the next; for truly I say to you, you will not finish going through the cities of Israel until the Son of Man comes.

In the above account, Matthew gives sufficient explication of the pending persecutions of the disciples. For some, the Lukan account is somewhat insufficient. However, even if Luke's graphic details were a deliberate omission, his brief words are sufficient in making its point: this mission is unpredictable, and has serious and possible dangers.

It is highly probable that the 70 escaped persecution because they actually returned from their mission with unexpected exuberance.³ This may be the reason their mission was temporary, whereas the commissioning of the Twelve was a permanent assignment:⁴ A permanent mission has a greater chance of encountering violence than a temporary mission. Nevertheless, the Twelve were warned that there might be wolves in private homes, and in the public synagogues.⁵ They were commanded to "go," regardless of possible plight.⁶ The Twelve were told not to fear the one "that can kill the

³ Luke 10:17.

⁴ Alfred Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to S. Luke*, ICC (London: T&T Clark International, 1896), 270.

⁵ Matthew 10:14, 17.

⁶ Matthew 10:3.

body, but fear the one who can destroy both body and soul in hell.”⁷ If they encountered any hostilities, Jesus said to “shake off the dust from your feet.”⁸ Even if they were handed over to the courts and synagogues, they were not to worry, “for it will be given you in that hour what you are to say.”⁹ So, the apostles went about preaching and teaching, and as the book of Acts records, they were flogged, afflicted, and jailed.¹⁰

It was not their perseverance that we admire, so much as the spirit and temper with which they conducted themselves throughout the whole of their trials: they shewed a firmness that was invincible; but without petulance, without anger, without ostentation, without complaint. They acted, not from self-will, but from zeal for their Lord, and love to their fellow-creatures: and their glorying was, not from a proud conceit of being martyrs to their cause, but from a persuasion that to suffer any thing for Christ was the greatest honor that could possibly be conferred on mortal men; since it gave them an opportunity of manifesting their love to Christ, and rendered them conformable to his blessed image.¹¹

The perseverance and love for humanity of the Twelve were the reason why they imbued so many to righteousness and to salvation: not because of what happened to them, but because of what was happening within them. Their experiences were unlike anything the world had ever experienced before. It was pandemic; even more, it was contagious. The apostles caught the fever of Christianity, and both Jews and Gentiles alike were infected. This fever changed the entire Roman Empire! Even the emperor Constantine was eventually changed and caught the febrility of this Christian outbreak.

⁷ Matthew 10:28.

⁸ Matthew 10:14.

⁹ Matthew 10:19-23.

¹⁰ Acts 5:20, 23.

¹¹Charles Simeon, *Horae Homileticae: John XIII to Acts*, vol. 14 (London: Holdsworth and Ball, 1833), 320–323.

As a result, Constantine dispensed a panacean edict to the entire Roman Empire to cease all Christian persecutions.¹²

Ultimately, these first century Christians turned a pagan world from upside down to right side up. Christ, the apostles, and the martyrs made an indelible impression on the world—not only their world, but the world to come. How did they do it? They had a force driving them and compelling them to go to the lowest depth of humility—and at the same time, inspiring them to reach greater heights in righteousness.¹³ This force was like no other—pure, holy, righteous, and filled with wisdom. Sometimes the Holy Spirit is called: τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος: the Spirit of the Holy God. “But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.”¹⁴ Not only was the Holy Spirit in them, but also the Spirit was working beside them, giving them divine wisdom and pointing the way to righteousness.¹⁵ The Holy Spirit was their present-day help—and he can be evangelists’ present-day help, too. If they will just plant the evangelistic seed, water it with the Word, and let God give the

¹² F. Cross and Elizabeth Livingstone, eds., *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2005), 408. “At that battle, following instructions received in a dream on the previous night, Constantine fought under the sign of the Cross, which was subsequently modified into the **Labarum* standard. He attributed his victory to the Christian God, and shortly afterwards toleration and imperial favor were given to Christianity.”

¹³ John 16:13.

¹⁴ John 16:13.

¹⁵ John 16:13.

increase.¹⁶ After all, it is God's volition as to whether he wants to change the disposition of people's hearts. The most preeminent example of this, is the example of Lydia, "The Lord opened her heart to respond to the things spoken by Paul."¹⁷ If the Lord opened Lydia's heart, he may be inclined to open others' hearts, too. If the evangelists just do their part, surely the Lord will do his part:

Evangelists must let God work the heeding through the hearing. Then will his blessed purpose be accomplished. Lydia came to faith. Luke says that this was accomplished through "the things spoken by Paul." He thus credits Paul with Lydia's conversion. This was undoubtedly the fact; Paul's companions at most reinforced what he said. In Lydia evangelists have a beautiful example of adult conversion. There is no emotionalism, no ranting of the preacher to work up his hearer, no agitation and shouting by the hearer, but only the silent touch of the Spirit as the ear conveys the blessed truth to the heart, only the true inward assent, the blessed confidence and trust which presently manifest themselves in open confession.¹⁸

Evangelists can conclude from the above text that it is the Spirit of God that opens the heart. Therefore, it is only reasonable to petition God, in order to open the hearts of the unchurched and the lost. There are many hardened hearts in the world. Evangelists must do their part by presenting the gospel to those hardened hearts. The opening, then, is God's part. The knocking is evangelists' part. Therefore, it is a joint effort by God and man. God is the One who opens the heart, not man.¹⁹ For it is

¹⁶ 1 Corinthians 3:6.

¹⁷ Acts 16:14.

¹⁸ R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of the Acts of the Apostles* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1961), 659.

¹⁹ John Chrysostom, Homilies of St. John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople, on the Acts of the Apostles," in *Saint Chrysostom: Homilies on the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistle to the Romans*, ed. Philip Schaff, trans. J. Walker et al., vol. 11, A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, First Series (New York, NY : Christian Literature Company, 1889), 220–221.

written: “I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.”²⁰ Although the Lord opens the heart with his Spirit, the decadent heart can refuse to open up and let the Spirit of God come in and take up residence:

The Lord opens the heart, but the hand with which he lifts the latch and draws the door is the Word which he makes us hear, and the door opens as evangelists heed, προσέχειν, keep holding our mind to what evangelists hear. No man can open the door of his heart (καρδία is the center of thought and will) himself, nor can he help the Lord to open it by himself lifting the latch and moving the door. The one thing he can do is to bolt the door, i. e., refuse to hear and to heed; and thus he can keep the door closed and bar it even more effectually than it was at first. This prevents conversion.²¹

Even if conversion does not happen in the unbelievers’ hearts through the wooing of the Holy Spirit, evangelists should “not lose heart in doing good, for in due time they will reap if they do not grow weary (Gal. 6:9).” Evangelists should not decrease the gospel by preempting it, but they should increase it, by presenting it. Evangelists must present the gospel to every creature: they just need to proclaim and present it, and then sit back and watch the wooing of the Holy Spirit.²² If evangelists would just do that, they would do well. It is the Holy Spirit’s job, not evangelists, to bring conviction to the heart and thereby repentance.²³ Thus, evangelists should pray and ask God to convict their sinful hearts. Evangelists should not be so concerned with the results of their

²⁰ Ezekiel 36:26.

²¹ Lenski, *The Interpretation of the Acts of the Apostles*, 658.

²² Mark 16:15; John 6:44.

²³ John 16:8.

performance; rather, they should be more concerned about their reasons for performing. The primary goal of evangelists is to glorify God and to extend his kingdom. If their work is not bearing this fruit, then there is a good chance that they have taken their eyes off of their primary goal.

In truth, modern-day evangelists should not allow the negative reactions of the unchurched to determine what evangelistic mode is optimal. Evangelists need to evangelize their lost communities, whether the unchurched like it or not! The unchurched should not decide whether evangelists should evangelize their communities: the Lord makes that decision.²⁴ What will evangelists say to the Lord, on the Day of Reckoning, about their reluctance to evangelize their lost communities? “Times have changed, and we did not want the unchurched to become upset about visitations from strangers”—imagine telling the Smitten Lamb that excuse. Today’s evangelists should expect hostile behaviors from the unchurched, and should be willing to die for their faith in the same fashion as the Early Church. This does not mean that all evangelistic attempts will be hostile. It is possible that most evangelistic attempts will be hospitable.

The apostles have laid the foundation of the Church. They were original builders of the new Christian movement, and a lighthouse for the entire lost world to see, in the age of darkness.²⁵ They called every believer to a new way, to a new start, both Jew and Greek, to repent of their old ways and start living in the new. Eventually, their call to

²⁴ Luke 10:2-16.

²⁵ Ephesians 2:20.

discipleship cost them their very lives; they endured terrible and relentless persecutions. Yet, they overcame their foes and whatever challenges were foisted upon them, laying the foundation for a new breed of Christians to come after them and proving themselves to be worthy examples and the great architects of the Christian faith.

After having been unjustly imprisoned, and miraculously delivered from their confinement, they were again summoned before their oppressors, and again, though without either invective or complaint, they vindicated their conduct in an unanswerable manner: and, notwithstanding they were beaten, and menaced with severer treatment, and might therefore have felt indignation rise in their bosoms, they lost sight of all the injuries which they themselves had sustained, and gloried in their sufferings as an honor conferred upon them, an honor of which they deemed themselves utterly unworthy.²⁶

It was their perseverance that drove them to be the very image of Christ, risking their lives, and never stopping. Someone would think that after all of these things they would have stopped and allowed their wounds to heal—especially after the disciples were brutally flogged by the injunction of the Sanhedrin. The disciples neither stopped, nor did they complain about their pain. Instead, they rejoiced in their pain having found fellowship with Christ's suffering.²⁷ Another person might think that they should have allowed the dust of hostility to settle. They neither ceased, nor did they decrease their evangelism. In fact, they stirred up more dust—preaching and teaching Jesus is the Christ.²⁸ Many would think that the disciples would have intense fear after the Pharisees

²⁶Simeon, *Horae Homileticae*, 320–323.

²⁷ Acts 5:41.

²⁸ Acts 5:42.

flogged them. They did not have any fear because their perfect love for Christ only cast out their fears.²⁹ They never looked back, in sorrow or regret; they only looked towards the goal, which is in Christ Jesus.³⁰ The Pharisees' malicious plans backfired and had an inverse affect. They thought that by flogging the apostles they would bring about the cessation of Christianity.³¹ How wrong they were—the fruit of the apostles' labors was not from them—it was from God. How could they fight against God?³² Not only did the apostles increase their preaching and teaching, but they continued in them: day after day, and from house to house.³³ There are many different opinions amongst commentators about whether there were 72 or 70 disciples. Some of the Greek manuscripts have 70 and others have 72.³⁴ The evidences are equally divided between the two,³⁵ and much depends upon a scholar's rendition. Many commentators think that they have deciphered the exact number of emissaries. They base their conclusions on the Masoretic Text and the Septuagint: 70 from the Masoretic Text and 72 from the Septuagint.³⁶ Their logic for the 70 is based upon Moses' selection of the 70 elders in

²⁹ 1 John 4:18.

³⁰ Philippians 3:14.

³¹ Acts 5:40.

³² Acts 5:39.

³³ Kenneth O. Gangel, *Acts*, HNTC (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1998), 80.

³⁴ John A. Martin, "Luke," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, vol. 2, eds. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 233.

³⁵ Mark C. Black, *Luke*, CPNIVC (Joplin, MO: College Press, 1995), Lk 10:1a.

³⁶ John Nolland, *Luke 9:21–18:34*, WBC (Dallas, TX: Word, 1998), 549.

Number 11:16, and the 70 nations of the world in Gen. 10:2-31.³⁷ As for the 72, their logic is based upon spreading the gospel to the Jews, and spreading the gospel to the Gentile nations.³⁸ It is possible that neither explanation is entirely accurate, and that the evidence for each may be coincidental. It is highly unlikely that Jesus called 70 or 72 emissaries, just to fulfill a reference in the Old Testament, which had no relevance to his present-day ministry. Could it be that Jesus called people to follow him out of a large group, and that the 70 or 72 just randomly responded to his call by happenstance? Can we make the same argument for the even numbers of 70 or 72 missionaries?

The 70 or 72 may be random, but the sending them out two-by-two does not seem random at all.³⁹ It seems to suggest purpose and design. Fitzmyer states, "It is more probably to be explained by the notion of the testimony of two witnesses in judicial cases."⁴⁰ Fitzmyer's point may be cogent in this matter. Jesus says, "you will even be brought before governors and kings for my sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles."⁴¹ Since Jesus knew they were about to be condemned by the system of jurisprudence, he prepared them for it by sending them out in pairs. The testimony of two would be more cogent than one, and they could sufficiently attest to the

³⁷ Black, *Luke*, Lk 10:1-24.

³⁸ Black, *Luke*, Lk 10:1a. Luke 9:1-6; 10:1-24.

³⁹ Luke 10:1.

⁴⁰ A. Joseph and S. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke X-XXIV: Introduction, Translation, and Notes*, AB (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008), 846.

⁴¹ Matthew 10:18.

manifestation of the Gospel in Christ.⁴² Sending them out by two was also used for the provision of companionship, protection, and for double witness that is stipulated in Deuteronomy 17:6 and 19:15.⁴³ One may have doubts about these different explanations but one thing is certain: the 70 or 72 were definitely preparing the way for the Lord.⁴⁴

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⁴² Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to S. Luke*, 272.

⁴³ Walter L. Leifeld, "Luke," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1984), 937.

⁴⁴ Luke 10:1.

⁴⁵ Luke 10:1.

⁴⁶ Joseph and Fitzmyer, *Luke X-XXIV*, 846.

⁴⁷ Matthew 10:18.

⁴⁸ Plummer, *St. Luke*, 272.

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“The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.”⁵¹ In the Old Testament, the harvest was viewed as reaping for Judgment;⁵² but in the New Testament, it was viewed as reaping for redemption.⁵³ This is why Jesus wanted the 70 to pray, so the harvest would not be reaping for judgment, but instead, reaping for redemption. The Lord says, “pray,” because he knows that prayer is the greatest way of producing positive results,⁵⁴ and without Christ, evangelists can do nothing.⁵⁵ Was Jesus saying to pray, so that the 70 could get more workers in the fields of the harvest, or was he saying to pray because he already had workers in the fields? Plummer seems to think that the presence of the Twelve and the 70 were the answer to his prayers.⁵⁶ This could be true, if Jesus was teaching the 70 a lesson in prayer, but that logic is against contextual reasoning. The

⁴⁹ Walter L. Leifeld, “Luke,” in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke*, vol. 8, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1984), 937.

⁵⁰ Luke 10:1

⁵¹ Luke 10:2.

⁵² Joel 3:1-13.

⁵³ Joseph and Fitzmyer, *Luke X–XXIV*, 846. Matthew 13:37-43.

⁵⁴ J. C. Ryle, *Luke* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1997), Lk 10:1–7.

⁵⁵ John 15:5.

⁵⁶ Plummer, *St. Luke*, 272.

text simply does not say that this was the case: not even a hint is conveyed in the surrounding context. Butler seems to think that he was asking the 70 to pray, so others could engage in the mission.⁵⁷ If this is true, then Jesus could not select a specific number as 70, in order to keep up with the Jewish tradition. Nevertheless, the biblical text seems to postulate that even 70 was too few and the harvest was just too many.

This was not just an issue in Jesus' day, but it is an issue in our day as well.

Hypothetically speaking, Jesus looked at the 70, and then turned around and looked at the harvest and said: we are too few, we must pray more. Jesus was not saying just to pray—but to beseech. The word beseech is the Greek word, “δέομαι.” It means to ask with a sense of urgency, with the implication of a presumptive need—in other words, “to plead, to beg.”⁵⁸ Pleading and begging was not enough; Jesus wanted his missionaries to ask in urgency and haste.⁵⁹ Obviously, Jesus wanted more missionaries, and he wanted them at that very moment.⁶⁰ In a sense, he was saying that the harvest is ready. It cannot be delayed any longer. The time is now, lest the mission spoils.⁶¹

The imperative, ὑπάγετε, or “go,” and the exclamation, ἰδοὺ, “behold” predict the seriousness and the difficulties of the mission. The Lord uses the dichotomy of the lambs and the wolves, which postulates opposition, peril, and hostility, as opposed to

⁵⁷ Trent C. Butler, *Luke*, HNTC (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000), 168.

⁵⁸ Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York, NY: United Bible Societies, 1996), 407.

⁵⁹ Plummer, *St. Luke*, 272–273.

⁶⁰ Butler, *Luke*, 168.

⁶¹ Butler, *Luke*, 168.

innocence without any offense⁶² The 70 are like lambs—defenseless and dependent on God alone,⁶³ but wolves by nature are offensive, and they are dependent upon their independency for survival. So, the sheep must beware.⁶⁴ Even though Luke does not mention any involvement of wolves in particular, it is presumed from Matt. 10:18 that the wolves are the Pharisees, governors, and kings. In Luke chapter 10, these wolves are not any threat to the lambs on this particular mission because of Luke's omission of any threat to the 70 and their admission of joy.⁶⁵ They may experience joy on this particular mission,⁶⁶ but this may not always be the case,⁶⁷ so nevertheless they need to beware. Although their future ministerial endeavors may be without peril, the Lord forewarns them of the possible danger. Since the Lord has told them about the possible threat, it is obvious that the Lord is not trying to deceive them by promoting an evangelistic ministry without any possible conflict.⁶⁸ In a sense, this seems to be counterproductive: the Lord is telling his sheep about the lurking wolves on their itinerant travels, which may only give the sheep an incentive not to go, rather than to go. However, this turns out to be productive, rather than counterproductive. Not only has the Lord given them a

⁶² Joseph and Fitzmyer, *Luke X–XXIV*, 847.

⁶³ Leifeld, "Luke," 937.

⁶⁴ Leifeld, "Luke," 937.

⁶⁵ Luke 10:17.

⁶⁶ Luke 10:17.

⁶⁷ Acts 20:29.

⁶⁸ Ryle, *Luke*.

plan to overcome the wolves, but also he gives them the power to overcome them.⁶⁹ Evangelists should always seek the Lord for guidance before engaging in evangelistic initiation. Just as the Lord gave the 70 a contingent plan, it is highly likely that he will give today's evangelists contingent plans, too. He may not intervene in supernatural ways, but may instead guide evangelists in natural ways.⁷⁰ There are ways that the Church can avoid persecution by having a reasonable contingency plan in practice.⁷¹ Even then, it may not always be possible to avoid persecution because as long as the church exists, persecution will always be present in Christendom.⁷² After all, the wolves will be the wolves and the lambs must act like lambs. They must "be shrewd as serpents and innocent as doves,"⁷³ because occasionally there will be persecution.⁷⁴ Throughout evangelist's lives, if evangelists are not being persecuted then there is a possibility that they are not evangelizing in the way that Christ has instructed, which was mostly personal: one-on-one evangelism. This way of evangelism may bring peace with Christ or hostility with men.⁷⁵ Most of today's evangelists have this concept deeply rooted in their psyche. They know that agreeability will precipitate peace with men, but

⁶⁹ Matthew 10:4-11; 10:17-19.

⁷⁰ Matthew 10:17-19; 10:4-11.

⁷¹ Using walkie-talkies is a great way of alerting cohorts of danger or evangelizing in groups, instead of engaging in solo evangelism.

⁷² Ryle, *Luke*, Lk 10:1-7.

⁷³ Matthew 10:16.

⁷⁴ 2 Timothy 3:12.

⁷⁵ Luke 10:6.

disagreeability will precipitate hostility. Here is the conundrum. If they are seeking peace with all men, then their emphasis is placed more on men than on Christ. Thus, their evangelism will have the presence of deniability and passivism. If they are seeking peace with Christ, then their emphasis is placed more on Christ than on men. Thus, their evangelism will have the presence of acceptability and activism.

To accept the terms of a perilous mission is difficult by itself, but the disciples were told not to arm themselves and to take no provisions for survival.⁷⁶ They were to rely on the provisions of God and to depend solely on him. Their indispensable needs would be supplied, not of themselves, but through divine provisions.⁷⁷ In the urgency of their need, God would manifest his provision.⁷⁸ They were to focus solely on the things of God and not of the world, shunning even the most basic distractions: money belt, bags, shoes, and to greet no one.⁷⁹ This account varies in other gospels, but his is a great

⁷⁶ M. Spence-Jones, ed., *St. Luke*, The Pulpit Commentary, vol. 1 (New York, NY: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1909), 270.

⁷⁷ Plummer, *St. Luke*, 273.

⁷⁸ Black, *Luke*, Lk 10:4–6.

⁷⁹ Plummer, *St. Luke*, 273. μή βαστάζετε βαλλάντιον, μή πήραν, μή ὑποδήματα. “The Talmud enjoins that no one is to go on the Temple Mount with staff, shoes, scrip, or money tied to him in his purse. Christ’s messengers are to go out in the same spirit as they would go to the services of the temple, avoiding all distractions. Edersh. *The Temple*, p. 42. From βαστάζετε we infer that ὑποδήματα were not to be *carried* in addition to what were worn on the feet. Sandals were allowed in the temple. Comp. 9:3, 22:35. The whole charge means, “Take with you none of the things which travellers commonly regard as indispensable. Your wants will be supplied.” This account varies in other gospels.

lesson to abstain from all forms of covetousness, chatter, and time wasting.⁸⁰

Evangelists need to be totally devoted to evangelism and discipleship.⁸¹

Let us strive to show worldly people that we have no time for their way of living. Let us demonstrate to them that we find life too precious to spend it in constant feasting, visiting, and the like, as if there were no death, no judgment, or no life to come. Let us have the same principle as Nehemiah, who said, “I am carrying on a great project and cannot go down” (Nehemiah 6:3).⁸²

To stop and greet someone by way of casual conversation will take a considerable amount of time and a shifting of directive. The 70 had an urgent matter:⁸³ the Lord is now coming. The 70 needed to prepare the way for the Lord. There was no time to waste.

In the King James Version and the English Standard Version, the preferred translation is the “son of peace.”⁸⁴ However, the New American Standard Bible omits the idiom, “son of peace.”⁸⁵ Jesus may have borrowed this idiom from Classical or Hellenistic Greek.⁸⁶ The Greek expression, “υἱὸς εἰρήνης,” could mean a peaceable person or a man worthy or destined for peace.⁸⁷ The main idea is to find a man of peace

⁸⁰Albert Barnes, *Notes on the New Testament: Luke & John*, ed. Robert Frew (London, UK: Blackie & Son, 1884–1885), 64–65.

⁸¹ Ryle, *Luke*, Lk 10:1–7.

⁸² Ryle, *Luke*, Lk 10:1–7.

⁸³ Barnes, *Luke & John*, 64–65.

⁸⁴ Luke 6:10.

⁸⁵ Luke 6:10.

⁸⁶ Marshall, *Gospel of Luke*, 419–420.

⁸⁷ Marshall, *Gospel of Luke*, 419–420.

by searching and testing and saying “peace be to this house.” Instantly, the evangelist will know whether the house is a house of peace or a house of hostility. If the house passes the peace test, the missionaries will be their guests. Then, the house will be viewed as a house of peace. But, if the house fails the test, the missionaries will then leave, and the peace will return back to them.⁸⁸ This house will be viewed as a house of hostility.

It is obvious that the 70 did not know and were not familiar with the occupants of the houses. If they did know the occupants, there would not have been any need for undergoing a peace test; peace would have already been established through acquaintances and by having relational experiences with the residents. However, since the leaders of the household did not know the residents, then the leaders would decide whether they should stay or leave. The missionaries were presented with two possible outcomes: either they would encounter a house of peace or a house of hostility (Luke 10:6). In door-to-door evangelism, it is difficult to predict residents’ reactions, especially when visitation is cold-turkey and unannounced.⁸⁹ So, why would Jesus send missionaries to set up house churches when the residents were so unpredictable?⁹⁰ And why would he rush the process of setting up house churches when it was so

⁸⁸ Luke 10:5-7.

⁸⁹C. Hadaway, *Church Growth Principles: Separating Facts from Fiction* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1991), 24.

⁹⁰ Luke 10:6.

unpredictable and relationships with the residents had not been developed?⁹¹

Therefore, it is logical to make a theological deduction that Jesus was not setting up house churches. After all, the first church was first established in the book of Acts, not in Luke chapter 10 or Matthew chapter 10. Thus, door-to-door evangelism is the likely possibility.

Another clue concerning evidence of door-to-door evangelism is in Luke 9:53. Here, Jesus is traveling towards Jerusalem, and he sent the 70 before him. Jesus tells one man in particular to proclaim the gospel everywhere.⁹² Everywhere would mean literally everywhere, and would definitely include door-to-door evangelism.

Missionaries' responsibilities were to seek and to reach the whole town with Jesus' message.⁹³ People were not just loitering around the city streets, waiting for a messiah to come in town. The residents had to be summoned. They had to be called out. Prior to his arrival, Jesus sent the missionaries ahead of him, to inform the people to be ready for him.⁹⁴ Not only the people on the outside who may have been hanging around the city streets, but the people inside the houses needed to be informed as well.

The entire context of Luke 10 clearly shows that erecting churches was not the disciples' original intent, especially when the missionaries and Jesus were in a state of

⁹¹ Luke 10:4.

⁹² Luke 9:53, 60.

⁹³ John Nolland, *Luke 9:21–18:34*, WBC (Dallas, TX: Word, 1998), 559.

⁹⁴ Luke 9:52.

mobility and urgency.⁹⁵ The context of Luke 10 is not about erecting churches. Rather the context is about evangelizing from house-to-house, and letting people know that the Messiah is on the way. The missionaries were focusing on their mission—that is, to prepare the way for the messiah.⁹⁶ Lenski agrees with this interpretative assessment by saying, “the missionaries are to focus their attention on individual households, in contrast, for example, to mass meetings for teaching or preaching.”

Some biblical translations (NKJV, KJV, AV) show that door-to-door evangelism was the practical methodology for the Early Church. For example, these translations (NKJV, KJV, AV) translate “house to house” as “every house.” This makes it obvious that Luke is referring to door-to-door evangelism. If “house to house” could not univocally be translated as “every house,” then it is possible that Luke may have referred to house churches. But, since “house churches” can be equivocally translated as “every house,” then establishing house churches would have been unlikely. It is very difficult to believe that Jesus was trying to establish house churches in “every house” in Jerusalem, especially when “every house” was not hospitable to Christians.⁹⁷ There were some Jews who had a rancorous aversion to Christianity.⁹⁸ These Jews would not have allowed the apostles to teach in or to set up house churches in their homes. The context of

⁹⁵ Luke 10:4.

⁹⁶ R. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Luke's Gospel* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1961), 571.

⁹⁷ Luke 10:3-7.

⁹⁸ Acts 17:5; 5:25.

establishing house churches does not fit well with the phraseology, “in every house” and “everywhere preaching the word.” It was simply unreasonable to establish a church in every house in Jerusalem, but it did fit nicely with door-to-door evangelism. In other words, every house needs to be evangelized, but not every house needs to be a church.

There is similar contextual juxtaposition in Acts 20:20 that is somewhat analogous to Acts 5:20: “I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly and from house to house, solemnly testifying to both Jews and Greeks of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.” “It is worth noting that this greatest of all preachers preached from house to house and did not make his visits mere social calls.”⁹⁹ Here is one of the greatest evangelists—the apostle Paul—a fugitive. The Jews were plotting to kill him,¹⁰⁰ and he was on the run and had every reason to stop. However, he would not and could not stop preaching the gospel to both Jew and Gentile.

The Greek gives us a more definitive meaning for the English word, “shrink”: it is the word, “ὑποστέλλω,” which means to hold oneself back from doing something. It implies having a fearful concern—in this context, a concern about the hostile Jews.¹⁰¹ In spite of all the afflictions that Paul had experienced from the antagonistic Jews; he never stopped waving the Christian banner: θεὸν μετάνοιαν καὶ πίστιν εἰς τὸν κύριον

⁹⁹A. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, vol. III (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1930), 349-350.

¹⁰⁰ Acts 20:19, 3.

¹⁰¹ Louw and Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 165. Acts 20:19, 13.

ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν.¹⁰² The apostle Paul had premonitions of danger; the Holy Spirit had already forewarned him.¹⁰³ Yet, he was willing to put himself at risk, even risking his life, just to get the gospel message out. Paul wanted to bring mankind to the crossroads of repentance or rejection—even if it cost him his life. His message was not just for the Jews; he wanted both the Gentiles and the Jews to repent and be saved.¹⁰⁴ For the Jews, it was for their turning away from God, but for the Gentiles, it was turning toward God.¹⁰⁵ In spite of the risk, Paul felt the urgency to bring the gospel of repentance to both Jews and Gentiles.¹⁰⁶ The fact that Paul experienced violence in his evangelistic attempts only strengthens the likelihood of door-to-door evangelism. During times of Christian persecution in Paul’s day, house-to-house evangelism would have made it impossible for evangelists to avoid violent disaster. But, that would not have deterred Paul from his evangelistic mission; he was willing to bear the marks of Christ, just to spread the Gospel.¹⁰⁷ And in Acts 20:24, when the Holy Spirit told Paul that chains and tribulations awaited him, he says, “none of these things move me.” All evangelists should have this mindset.

¹⁰²Kurt Aland et al, *Novum Testamentum Graece*, 28th Edition (Stuttgart, Germany: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2012). The transliteration of the Greek scripture is, testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. Acts 20:21.

¹⁰³ Acts 20:23.

¹⁰⁴John Lange et al, *A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures: Acts* (Bellingham, WA: Scribner, Armstrong & Co, 2008), 373.

¹⁰⁵ William J. Larkin Jr., *Acts*, IVPNTC (Downers, IL: IVP, 1995), N. P.

¹⁰⁶ Acts 20:19-21.

¹⁰⁷ Galatians 6:17.

It is highly probable that both Jews and Gentiles were unconverted. This premise is based upon Paul making a distinction between the sects by saying, “Give no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the church of God.”¹⁰⁸ In this verse, Paul is distinguishing the unconverted Jews and Greeks from the converted church of God. In other words, Paul was trying to make a separation.¹⁰⁹ He is using symbolism to show those who are of God and those who are not of God. Using Paul’s reasoning as a basis, and reading Acts 20:20—“How I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly and from house to house, solemnly testifying to both Jews and Greeks of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ”—Paul is saying that the Jews and Gentiles were not in the body of Christ, prior to Paul’s engagement. Obviously, Paul was trying to convert them to Christianity, but some of the Jews and Gentiles did not like Paul’s persuasive attempts in door-to-door evangelism. If the apostle Paul underwent aggressive door-to-door evangelism in his day, then evangelists should follow his example. Dr. A. T. Robertson strengthens the case by saying that, “It is worth noting that this greatest of all preachers preached from house to house and did not make his visits mere social calls.”¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁸ 1 Corinthians 10:32.

¹⁰⁹ 1 Corinthians 10:32.

¹¹⁰ A. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, vol. 3 (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 1930), 349-350.

There are some commentators, such as Robert Utley,¹¹¹ Nicoll Robertson, Dennis Gaertner,¹¹² and John Polhill, who do not agree that house-to-house evangelism was their methodology. In particular, Nicoll Robertson and John Polhill assert that: “preaching is only for the temple” and “teaching is only for the homes.” Somehow, Nicoll Robertson and John Polhill must have read this biblical passage in a cursory fashion: “And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they kept right on teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.”¹¹³ Here is what Nicoll Robertson says about Acts 5:42, “The teaching continued at home in a household assembly, or κατά¹¹⁴ may be taken distributively, and refer to the Christian assemblies met together in various houses in the city.”¹¹⁵ But the text does not say Christian assemblies; the text only say that κατά has a distributive character that has its focus from house to house. It does not focus on the plurality of people in every house. Robertson tries to stretch κατά beyond its breaking point by extending it to apply to Christian assemblies. In other words,

¹¹¹ Robert Utley, *Luke the Historian: The Book of Acts* (Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International, 2003), 88.

¹¹² Dennis Gaertner, *Acts*, CPNIVC (Joplin, MO: College Press, 1995), Ac 20:18–21.

¹¹³ Acts 5:42.

¹¹⁴ Louw and Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 788. κατά¹: a marker of distributive relations, whether of place, time, or number—‘throughout, from ... to, ... after ...’ καὶ ἔσονται λιμοὶ καὶ σεισμοὶ κατὰ τόπους ‘there will be famines and earthquakes in place after place’ Mt 24:7; Σαῦλος δὲ ἐλυμαίνετο τὴν ἐκκλησίαν κατὰ τοὺς οἴκους εἰσπορευόμενος ‘Saul was trying to destroy the church by going from house to house’ Ac 8:3; καὶ ἐπορεύοντο οἱ γονεῖς αὐτοῦ κατ’ ἔτος εἰς Ἱερουσαλὴμ ‘and his parents went to Jerusalem year after year’ Lk 2:41; καθ’ ἡμέραν ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ ἐκαθεζόμεν διδάσκων ‘day after day I sat in the Temple teaching’ Mt 26:55; ἤρξαντο λυπεῖσθαι καὶ λέγειν αὐτῷ εἰς κατὰ εἰς ‘they began to be sad and say to him, one after another’ Mk 14:19.

¹¹⁵ Nicoll Robertson, *The Expositor’s Greek Testament: Commentary*, vol. 2 (New York, NY: George H. Doran Company, n.d.), 163.

Robertson is using the idiomatic phraseology, “Christian assemblies,” as a way to refer to house churches only. Acts 8:1-3 helps by bringing further clarity to this discussion:

Saul was in hearty agreement with putting him to death. And on that day a great persecution began against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. Some devout men buried Stephen, and made loud lamentation over him. But Saul began ravaging the church, entering house after house, and dragging off men and women, he would put them in prison.

The above text explains that Saul was trying to destroy the church by going house to house. The text clearly states that, “they were all scattered.” In a way, this could be viewed as the diaspora. The diaspora suggests that Paul did not know where they were, so he went house to house trying to find them. In this case, he found one man—in his home, not men and women. There was no genocide or the deliberate killing of a large group of people, especially those supposedly taking part in Christian assemblies. These men were taken from their homes—they were not in a church. It is important to note here that the text says “church” and not “churches.” There was only one church in Jerusalem at this time.¹¹⁶ The context is not suggesting that there were churches all over Jerusalem. Church in this text is considered to be the collection of participating men and women who were scattered throughout Jerusalem. Paul may have received his initial door-to-door training from his previous experiences of persecuting the Christians: He “began ravaging the church, entering house after house, and dragging off men and women, he would put them in

¹¹⁶ Acts 8:1.

prison.”¹¹⁷ Logically speaking, if he could find them to persecute one-by-one, by way of door-to-door evangelism—then surely after his conversion, he can evangelize them, one-by-one, by way door-to-door evangelism, for the sake of redemption.¹¹⁸

Conversely, Pohill has fostered a more complex formulaic construction by positing Acts 5: 42 in this fashion:

And the witness to the name continued—publicly in the temple and privately in the homes of the Christians. Luke seems to have used a common Greek rhetorical construction in v. 42 called a chiasm, which is most easily pictured as an A-B-B-A pattern. In the temple (A) and in homes (B), the apostles taught (B) and preached the gospel (A). Teaching was the task within the Christian fellowship, preaching the public task in the temple grounds.¹¹⁹

The purpose of examining Polhill’s comments is to debunk his interpretive comments with one cogent scripture. Examining Acts 5:21 will show that his interpretation should have been tested, based upon this objective biblical passage: “Upon hearing this, they entered into the temple about daybreak and began to teach.” This passage of scripture disputes Polhill’s attestations that preaching is immutably assigned for public assembly and teaching is immutably assigned for private assembly. As mentioned earlier, this biblical passage controverts Polhill by stating that “they entered into the temple about daybreak and began to teach.”¹²⁰ This substantiates the fact that the apostles taught in the temple, and it also debunks Polhill’s dogmatic assertions about the assignment of

¹¹⁷ Acts 8:3.

¹¹⁸ Acts 5:42.

¹¹⁹ John B. Polhill, *Acts*, NAC (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 174.

¹²⁰ Acts 5:21.

the words, “preach” or “teach.” The Greek words for “preach” and “teach” are “διδασκοντες” and “εὐαγγελιζόμενοι.” Pohill wants his readers to make an evangelistic distinction between the two complementary words. By presenting the word, “εὐαγγελίζω,” Luke wants his audience to know that “εὐαγγελίζω,” means, “to tell the good news or preach the gospel of Christ.”¹²¹ Likewise, in using the word, διδάσκω, he wants his audience “to provide instruction in a formal or informal setting, teach.”¹²² The Greek infinitives¹²³ of “teaching” and “preaching” are used interchangeably throughout the panoply of New Testament scriptures. There is no syntactical order or rule for these words to be in some type of immutable designation throughout the scriptures. In other words, those two Greek words are not assigned to any particular setting. The problem with Pohill’s hypothesis is that he is trying to amalgamate American culture with the culture of the Early Church—by specifically assigning preaching to a church setting and teaching to cell group or home setting. Those Greek words were used interchangeably in the Early Church.¹²⁴ “In some languages the verbs preached and taught may require a specific indication of the content of the preaching and teaching—for example, I

¹²¹ James Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek New Testament* (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997) N.P.

¹²² William Arndt, Frederick Danker, and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 241.

¹²³ Michael S. Heiser and Vincent M. Setterholm, *Glossary of Morpho-Syntactic Database Terminology* (Lexham Press, 2013; 2013) N.P. Infinitive — A word that has characteristics of both a verb and a noun; that is, a “verbal noun” (cf. “to swim”). The Greek infinitive is a verbal form that has no person and number, and though it functions like a noun it has no gender or case. It is therefore “indeclinable.”

¹²⁴ Acts 17:1-3; 20:20.

preached and taught you the message about the Lord Jesus.”¹²⁵ For these reasons, commentators should not arbitrarily select a word or phrase to fit their dogmatic predilections without allowing the context to be the final arbiter.

Not only did they preach and exhort about Christ, but they also pointed to Jesus as the antitypical figure of the Old Testament—thereby verifying and substantiating their attestations by way of pointing it out through scriptural exegesis.¹²⁶ This gave them the impetus to never stop preaching and teaching Jesus as the Christ. There were times when they preached in an exhortative fashion and there were times when they taught in an exegetical fashion. Their deciding factor for determining which of the two approaches was the most suitable may never be determined. Yet, it is reasonable to surmise that it was the circumstances that determined their most suitable homiletic approach. In other words, there were times when the circumstances demanded a public exhortative proclamation, and there were times when the circumstances demanded a more private exegetical didacticism. This is why Luke says that the apostles taught and preached Jesus as the Christ.¹²⁷ He was simply amalgamating “preaching” and “teaching,” so that his audience could make a distinction about the certain dynamics of the two homiletic approaches. In any event, it did not matter what difficult circumstance precipitated the homiletic approach. Their only concern was that they

¹²⁵ Barclay Newman and Eugene Nida, *A Handbook on the Acts of the Apostles* (New York, NY: United Bible Societies, 1972), 390.

¹²⁶ Acts 17:2-3; 18:28.

¹²⁷ Acts 4:2; 28:31.

must preach and teach Jesus as the Christ. The apostles were prepared to adapt to any circumstances, at any cost—and all for the proclamation and the distribution of the gospel of Christ.

It is logical to come to the conclusion that the apostles must have practiced house-to-house evangelism. Jesus told his apostles to “Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature,”¹²⁸ and house-to-house evangelism would have been a likely choice to satisfy this requirement. The word “every creature” applies to every Jew, Gentile, or every human being. To do otherwise, would have risked the possibility of not evangelizing “every creature.” The apostles probably did not want to take this risk. Their mandate was to not miss one creature.¹²⁹ If the apostles were trying to reach every creature, their goal may not have been reached by evangelizing in the synagogues or public places exclusively. Not everyone was in these places, but house-to-house evangelism would have increased the possibility of reaching every creature.

If the great apostles made house-to-house visitations, so can today’s evangelists. What is stopping evangelists from evangelizing every creature? Is it the difficulty of gaining entrance into apartments and residential communities? If that is so, then let evangelists go to the next community that is not gated. Is it fear? Then, let evangelists ask God to give them—gumption and grit. The apostles experienced fear, too, but they did not allow fear to rob them out of their evangelistic responsibilities.

We must therefore arm ourselves equally against the allurements of inward temptation, and the terrors of outward persecution; and have it as an

¹²⁸ Mark 16:15.

¹²⁹ Mark 16:15.

established principle in our hearts, that nothing is, on any account, to interfere with our duty to God. Let us, instead of dreading the cross, account it an honor to suffer for our Lord. Sooner or later we must have a cross to bear, if we will be followers of Christ. We may be screened for a time; but “all who will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution.” Nor should any be ashamed of the cross; but rather, as Moses and all the saints of old, accounted the reproach of Christ to be their honor, and loss for Christ their gain, so should we rejoice and leap for joy, if we be counted worthy to endure any thing for our blessed Lord. To suffer for him is represented as a special favor conferred on us by God for Christ’s sake; a favor equal, if not superior, to the gift of salvation itself. In this light then let us view the cross; and we shall take it up with cheerfulness, and bear it with unshaken constancy.¹³⁰

So, therefore, let evangelists run the evangelistic race—the race of the Great Commission—and grab the evangelistic baton from the great apostle in both public and private sectors,¹³¹ knowing that evangelistic crowns are just waiting for those whom have maintained “unshaken constancy.” But if evangelists do not run the evangelistic race, then the blood will be on their hands.¹³² In fact, God gives a lucid example of the consequential judgment that befalls those who do not exhort or evangelize their neighbors:

Son of man, I have appointed you a watchman to the house of Israel; whenever you hear a word from my mouth, warn them from me. When I say to the wicked, “You will surely die,” and you do not warn him or speak out to warn the wicked from his wicked way that he may live, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand. Yet if you have warned the wicked and he does not turn from his wickedness or from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but you have delivered yourself. Again, when a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and I place an obstacle before him, he will die; since you have not warned him, he shall die in his sin, and his righteous deeds, which he has done, shall not be remembered; but his

¹³⁰Charles Simeon, *Horae Homileticae: John XIII to Acts*, vol. 14 (London, UK: Holdsworth and Ball, 1833), 320–323.

¹³¹ Acts 20:24.

¹³² Acts 20:24; 18:6; Ezekiel 33:1-6.

blood I will require at your hand. However, if you have warned the righteous man that the righteous should not sin and he does not sin, he shall surely live because he took warning; and you have delivered yourself.¹³³

Even though these verses are from the Old Testament they are still efficacious today. In fact, Paul picks up this thought in the New Testament: “Therefore I declare to you this day that I am not responsible for the blood of any of you, for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God.”¹³⁴ Then, in another passages of scripture, Luke writes, “Paul began devoting himself completely to the word, solemnly testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ. But when they resisted and blasphemed, he shook out his garments and said to them, ‘Your blood be on your own heads! I am clean.’”¹³⁵ This is another example of how Paul was experiencing opposition and violence based upon his evangelistic attempts. In fact, after Paul finished teaching in the synagogue, he went next door to the house of Titius Justus, a worshiper of God. Then, the Bible says, “Crispus, the synagogue leader, and his entire household believed in the Lord; and many of the Corinthians who heard Paul believed and were baptized.” This is door-to-door evangelism. First, they did not know Christ and Paul preached to them. Second, they were saved by Paul’s message and were baptized. Then, Paul went to Titius’ house, and he finally went to Crispus’ house and his entire household was save through door-to-door evangelism. The fact that Paul mentioned “his entire household” is an indication that he went to Crispus’ house next, and then he went to the Corinthians’ houses. Paul

¹³³ Ezekiel 3:17-21.

¹³⁴ Acts 20:25.

¹³⁵ Acts 18:5-6.

left the synagogues after experiencing opposition from the Jews, and then he implies that he was going to the Gentiles' houses to evangelize.¹³⁶ Another point that can be gleaned from Acts 18:6 is that Paul was persistent in evangelism. In this verse, Paul warned about the gospel of Christ and the pending wrath of God, in the most egregious circumstances. What does this say to those who are willing to evangelize, only if they get favorable results? Paul evangelized, whether he got good results or bad results, "in season and out of season."¹³⁷

He was a faithful preacher. He not only preached that which was profitable, but he preached every thing that he thought might be profitable, and kept back nothing, though the preaching of it might either cost him more pains or be disobliging to some and expose him to their ill-will. He declined not preaching whatever he thought might be profitable, though it was not fashionable, nor to some acceptable. He did not keep back reproofs, when they were necessary and would be profitable, for fear of offending; nor did he keep back the preaching of the cross, though he knew it was to the Jews a stumbling-block and to the Greeks foolishness, as the Roman missionaries in China lately did. (6.) He was a catholic preacher. He testified both to the Jews and also to the Greeks.¹³⁸

Evangelists can learn a great lesson from the Apostle Paul, many of whom may be concerned about the possible dangers of evangelism or not getting favorable results from door-to-door evangelism. The Apostle Paul was not concerned about these conundrums. He was more concerned about dangers of not doing the will of God.¹³⁹ Many men may be more concerned about the potential dangers of door-to-door

¹³⁶ Acts 18:6-7.

¹³⁷ 2 Timothy 4:2.

¹³⁸ Matthew Henry, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994), 2156.

¹³⁹ Acts 18:6.

evangelism than the possible danger of doing God's will¹⁴⁰—but not to do the will of God is certainly more dangerous. Jesus encouraged his disciples in the presence of danger: “Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.”¹⁴¹ Paul's job was not just preaching in public places but to exhort in private places as well. Paul did not want the blood of those in both public and private settings to be on his hands because he did not declare the counsel of God to every creature. Richard Baxter had a similar passion to that of the Apostle Paul when Baxter made “a plea to ministers to teach, evangelize, catechize from house to house and maintain and model full Christian vitality.”¹⁴² Richard Baxter and the Apostle Paul were not the only great leaders who participated in door-to-door evangelism. There were others great leaders like Charles Spurgeon,¹⁴³

¹⁴⁰ John Calvin and Henry Beveridge, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, vol. 3 (Edinburgh, Scotland: The Calvin Translation Society, 1845), 249.

¹⁴¹ Matthew 10:28.

¹⁴² J. Packer, “Richard Baxter” in *Biographical Dictionary of Evangelicals*, ed. Timothy Larsen et al (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2003), 65.

¹⁴³ C. H. Spurgeon, *The Sword and Trowel: 1876* (London, UK: Passmore & Alabaster, 1876), 122. “Friday, Aug. 4. A meeting was held at the Tabernacle of the friends meeting in the Green Walk, Bermondsey, under the leadership of Mr. W. Olney, junior. This is a mission of the right kind, where working men and women throw their whole hearts into the work of evangelizing their neighbors, and under the divine blessing are eminently successful. Open-air preaching, tract giving and lending, house to house visitation, and every form of holy service are carried on with abounding perseverance and prayerfulness, and many are thus gathered unto the Lord.”

Dwight Moody,¹⁴⁴ Jonathan Edwards,¹⁴⁵ A.W. Tozier,¹⁴⁶ and John Wesley who all practiced door-to-door evangelism.¹⁴⁷

It is not as if door-to-door evangelism has changed because we now see a new era of rejection. Nothing has changed: there was rejection then, and there is rejection now. “That which has been is that which will be, and that which has been done is that which will be done. So there is nothing new under the sun.”¹⁴⁸ The apostles knew the peril of evangelism because Christ had warned them.¹⁴⁹ The apostles were willing to risk their very lives so that others may find new life in Christ: they were willing to exchange life for a changed life. The truth of the matter is that today’s evangelists may not be

¹⁴⁴Timothy George, *Mr Moody and the Evangelical Tradition* (New York, NY: T&T Clark, 2004), 71. Timothy George writes about Dwight Moody by recording this: “In Liverpool, Manchester and several other cities, a system of house-to-house visitation was put into effect. In several instances, special tracts were printed and handed out, with the words to the Gospel song, ‘Jesus of Nazareth Passeth By’, printed in poetic form on one side. On the other side was a short address from Moody, based upon the Scripture, ‘Behold, I stand at the door and knock.’”

¹⁴⁵Jonathan Edwards, *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, vol. 1 (Edinburgh, Scotland: Banner of Truth Trust, 1974), lxxx–lxxxi. “He did not neglect visiting his people from house to house, because he did not look upon it, in ordinary cases, to be one important part of the work of a gospel minister; but, because he supposed that ministers should, with respect to this, consult their own talents and circumstances, and visit more or less, according to the degree in which they could hope thereby to promote the great ends of the ministry.”

¹⁴⁶A. W. Tozier and Ron Eggert, *The Tozer Topical Reader*, vol. 1 (Camp Hill, PA: WingSpread, 1998), 177. “Let every minister continue in his station, taking especial care of all them that live within the precincts of his parish; preaching, exhorting, rebuking, publicly, and from house to house; warning all,—using all appointed means to draw them to Jesus Christ and the faith of the gospel; waiting with all patience on them that oppose themselves, until God give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; and in so doing, rest upon the calling he hath already received.”

¹⁴⁷John Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 3rd Edition, vol. 4 (London, UK: Wesleyan Methodist Book Room, 1872), 86–87. “SEPT 1776, Mon. 9. I began, what I had long intended, visiting the society from house to house, setting apart at least two hours in a day for that purpose.”

¹⁴⁸ Ecclesiastes 1:9.

¹⁴⁹ Luke 10:6.

willing to evangelize for the truth, whereas cults will evangelize for a lie. One evangelist, in particular, blames it on the passage of time. Times have changed, people's characters are not the same, and residents do not want strangers knocking on their doors.¹⁵⁰ A. W. Tozier, a renowned pastor and theologian, writes about this conundrum, in his book, *Tozier on Christian leadership: A 366-Day Devotional*, by saying:

We are twentieth-century Christians. Some of us are Christians only because it is convenient and pleasant and because it is not costing us anything. But here is the truth, whether we like it or not: the average evangelical Christian who claims to be born again and have eternal life is not doing as much to propagate his or her faith as the busy adherents of the cults handing out their papers on the street corners and visiting from house to house. We are not willing to take the spit and the contempt and the abuses those cultists take as they knock on doors and try to persuade everyone to follow them in their mistaken beliefs. The cultists can teach us much about zeal and effort and sacrifice, but most of us do not want to get that serious about our faith—or our Savior.¹⁵¹

Tozier is right: some Christians are lazy and not serious about evangelizing their faith. They are just making excuses for not evangelizing as they ought—excuses such that we are now living in a new age. Door-to-door evangelism does not have the same influence as it once did, especially since the rise of social media and new technology.¹⁵² The problem is not the rise of new technology. People are not going to reject Christianity because of the method of evangelism. They are rejecting Christianity because of its message. People simply are not interested in the church, Christianity, or

¹⁵⁰C. Hadaway, *Church Growth Principles: Separating Facts from Fiction* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1991), 24.

¹⁵¹A. W. Tozier, *Tozier on Christian Leadership: A 366-Day Devotional* (Camp Hill, PA: WingSpread, 2001), 1276.

¹⁵²Hadaway, *Church Growth Principles*, 24.

Christ.¹⁵³ It is high time for evangelists to stop blaming technology, social media, and nonreceptiveness. The problem is not the receptivity of the visitations—rather the issue is the reluctance to visit.¹⁵⁴

The phrase, “Do not keep moving from house to house,” has absolutely nothing to do with not evangelizing from house to house. It has everything to do with being content with what was prearranged before the arrival of the evangelists. In other words, the 70 should not have been looking for finer delectables or living quarters. The 70 were told to be content—otherwise they would be distracted from the ministry and seduced by materialism.¹⁵⁵ In a sense, this was a necessary discipline that Jesus was giving to the 70 so that they would not fix their vision on themselves, but on the needs of others and the extension of his kingdom.¹⁵⁶ While the 70 were given provisions for their ministerial efforts, they were not to abuse these privileges by satiating their appetites. The main idea was this: when the 70 first engaged with someone in a home, they should have been looking for an evangelistic headquarters, partly because there was a great urgency, and there was no time to be looking for better living conditions. The 70 needed to reach as many houses as they could reach. They needed to prepare the way for the Messiah because he was on his way.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵³Steve Dunkin, *Church Advertising: A Practical Guide* (Nashville: TN, Abingdon Press, 1982), 36.

¹⁵⁴Thomas Rainer, *Effective Evangelistic Churches: Successful Churches Reveal What Works and What Doesn't* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996), 41.

¹⁵⁵Black, *Luke*, Lk 10:7–8.

¹⁵⁶Luke 10:9.

¹⁵⁷John Nolland, *Luke 9:21–18:34*, WBC (Dallas, TX: Word, 1998), 559.

In Luke 10:8-10, the Lord introduces a contrast, which unfolds two possible results. A contrast is often identified by a marker such as the word, “but.” In short, a contrast is a difference between two end results. In a sense, a contrast can be perceived to be an antinomy, but yet similar by comparison. For example, in Luke 10: 8-11, Jesus says “Whatever city you enter and they receive you, eat what is set before you; and heal those in it who are sick, and say to them, ‘The kingdom of God has come near to you.’ But whatever city you enter and they do not receive you, go out into its streets and say, ‘Even the dust of your city which clings to our feet we wipe off in protest against you; yet be sure of this, that the kingdom of God has come near.’” In the first clause, Jesus knew that they were going into the city, and he prepared them for a positive reaction, while in the second clause he also knew they were going into the city, and he prepared them for a negative reaction. Both clauses prepared them to go into the same city, yet there are two different reactions—one positive and the other negative. By making this comparison, Jesus was preparing them to react differently in antinomic situations. In the terrestrial, this will have significant impact on the people of that city, regardless of the outcome. To those who accept the disciples, there will be dining and healing,¹⁵⁸ but for those who reject them, there will be dust shaking and judgment.¹⁵⁹ In the celestial, the divine retribution is reward and punishment from the same city; both contrasting reactions have a different outcome in the eschaton. If accepted, the kingdom of God

¹⁵⁸ Luke 10:8-9.

¹⁵⁹ Luke 10:11-15.

will come near you,¹⁶⁰ but if rejected, the kingdom of God will come against you.¹⁶¹

“Those who reject the Gospel and remain impenitent and unbelieving are not merely objects of pity and compassion but are deeply guilty in God’s sight. God called, but they refused. God spoke to them, but they would not listen.”¹⁶² In all of these things, there is a great consolation for evangelists, especially for those who partake in door-to-door evangelism. There are two verses in Luke 10 that bring consolation to evangelists: verses 11 and 16. In verse 11, Jesus says, “But when you enter a town and are not welcomed, go into its streets and say, ‘Even the dust of your town we wipe from our feet as a warning to you. Yet be sure of this: the kingdom of God has come near.’” In this verse, the focus is on the last sentence: “Yet be sure of this: the kingdom of God has come near.” This last sentence is a reminder for all who become discouraged when evangelizing. Even there is no positive result from evangelizing, the evangelists should be sure that they have done the right thing in following God’s command. The issue is not how many souls evangelists can win for Christ; rather the issue is whether evangelists will go for Christ. Evangelists may become very discouraged when they do not see the fruits of salvation. After all, it is not evangelists who save; it is God who saves.¹⁶³ Even if no souls are saved by evangelists’ exertions, evangelists have still done well in bringing the gospel near to those whom are perishing. Even if the lost reject the gospel,

¹⁶⁰ Luke 10:9.

¹⁶¹ Luke 10:15.

¹⁶² Ryle, *Luke*, Lk 10:8–16.

¹⁶³ 1 Corinthians 3:6.

evangelists have done a great service for the kingdom of God, because in the eschaton, the lost cannot say that they were not warned. They will be without excuse.¹⁶⁴ The lost are not rejecting the evangelists' message; the lost are rejecting Christ and God.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁴ Romans 1:20.

¹⁶⁵ Luke 10:16.

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW

Today's evangelism has changed significantly since the Early Church in some ways. There are some¹ modern-day pundits who are using ways of evangelism unknown in the Early Church, and question continuing some practices of evangelism implicit in the approaches of the Early Church.² Not only do they deduce that traditional outreach is ineffective, but they also think that "it is waning."³ As a result, they have done away with traditional door-to-door evangelism and have implemented evangelistic methods such as direct mail, newspaper advertisements, and radio advertisements in their outreach programs. In a way, it seems as though their modern-day evangelistic methods are working because some evangelists began their ministries with only one person and now they have a myriad of people packing their megachurches. This could pose a threat to traditional evangelism and may therefore jettison its practice. This leads to the question: should traditional evangelistic methods be used in modern times or should they be jettisoned altogether? What will be the optimal mode of evangelism: traditional or modern? Or, should evangelists use both methods in their outreach programs? This

¹ Adam Hamilton, *Leading Beyond the Walls: Developing Congregations with a Heart for the Unchurched* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2002), 56; Kirk Hadaway, *Church Growth Principles: Separating Facts from Fiction* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1991), 24; Steve Dunkin, *Church Advertising: A Practical Guide* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1982), 27.

²Based upon a theological deduction from Luke 10:1, it is my belief that the Early Church practiced Door-to-door evangelism from the words "every place."

³Thomas Rainer, *Effective Evangelistic Churches: Successful Churches Reveal What Works and What Doesn't* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Homan Publishers, 1996), 41.

literature reflection will explore the agreements and disagreements of various evangelistic pundits' methodologies, in order to determine the best method to use—or whether today's evangelists should use both modern and traditional evangelistic methods simultaneously.

One authority on evangelism who supports a modern-day evangelistic methodology is Kirk Hadaway. He believes that traditional evangelistic methods are no longer tenable in modern-day residential communities. Hadaway points to the difficulty of “gaining entrance to apartment buildings and planned residential communities with security guards or security gates.”⁴ Hadaway also believes that the main reason for the ineffectiveness of traditional methods of outreach is that visitations are unannounced or cold turkey.⁵ Instead of knocking on doors or going house-to-house unannounced, Hadaway suggests meeting potential converts at an agreed upon public meeting place.⁶ In this way, the planned visit would be less threatening and more inviting.⁷ In a sense, Hadaway has a cogent point: a visit from a known evangelist has a greater chance of being greeted in a hospitable way by prospective members than a visit from a stranger. Adam Hamilton acquiesces with Hadaway: together they prefer using non-traditional methods of evangelism rather than traditional ones. Adam Hamilton is the senior pastor of the United Methodist Church of the Resurrection in Leawood, Kansas; he is another

⁴ Hadaway, *Church Growth Principles*, 24

⁵ Hadaway, *Church Growth Principles*, 24

⁶ Hadaway, *Church Growth Principles*, 24

⁷ Hamilton, *Leading Beyond the Walls*, 56.

pastor who has built a megachurch without using traditional methods. The Church of the Resurrection is the largest Methodist church in the United States. This megachurch started out with one member, the pastor himself. Now this church has 20,000 members with a weekly attendance exceeding 10,000 devotees. In his book, *Leading Beyond the Walls: Developing Congregations with a Heart for the Unchurched*, Hamilton points out that unscheduled or unannounced in-home visitation has no evangelistic merit.⁸ Any in-home visitation, says Hamilton, will be received with resistance, reluctance, or, even worse, it may be perceived as life threatening.⁹ Hamilton explicates his evangelistic methodology first by identifying the problem; then he gives his evangelistic solution in this statement: "In the cocooning culture[s] in which we live [,] people are no longer comfortable visiting with "strangers."¹⁰ Since parishioners may be considered as strangers, Hamilton suggests:

A pastor has an entree, because she or he is pastor, and is seen and known through the weekly sermon. But a lay team may not be received in the same way. Some certainly will welcome them, but others will go so far as to drop out of church to avoid the experience of having "strangers" call upon them or a scheduled visit.¹¹

According to Hamilton, a pastor has a familiar face; anyone else may be misconstrued as a potential threat.¹² But the pastor, suggests Hamilton, will be

⁸ Hamilton. *Leading beyond the Walls*, 56.

⁹ Hamilton. *Leading beyond the Walls*, 56.

¹⁰ Hamilton. *Leading beyond the Walls*, 56.

¹¹ Hamilton. *Leading beyond the Walls*, 56.

¹² Hamilton. *Leading beyond the Walls*, 56.

welcomed as the congregation's evangelistic agent, their known evangelizer. In addition, Hamilton believes that even lay team members would be considered as strangers. Logically speaking, a visitation from the known is far better than a visitation from the unknown.

Hadaway, on the other hand, does not specifically write about pastoral visitation—but he does mention that visitation has a greater chance of success with proselytes who already have visited the church.¹³ Hadaway believes that if visitation does not take place, then churches are “begging for decline.”¹⁴

Like Hadaway and Hamilton, Steve Dunkin also knows the frustration of door-to-door visitation. He points to the difficulty of high-rise apartments and gated communities as preemptive ways of impeding the process of door-to-door evangelism. Another problem that Dunkin addresses is the difficulty of recruiting evangelists. Dunkin seems to think that direct mail is the viable solution to these evangelistic conundrums because it has been the number one choice of churches over door-to-door evangelism.¹⁵ Although Dunkin likes the evangelistic results that direct mail brings, he does not jettison door-to-door evangelism altogether. Instead, he thinks that door-to-door evangelism brings a more personal form of communication than direct mail. In a way, Dunkin has a point: in choosing door-to-door evangelism, evangelists will be able to have an opportunity to meet people wherever they are, to answer their questions, to

¹³Hadaway, *Church Growth Principles*, 25.

¹⁴Hadaway, *Church Growth Principles*, 25.

¹⁵Steve Dunkin, *Church Advertising*, 27.

pray for them, and ultimately to invite them to church. Direct mail does not have the potential for heart-felt discussions like traditional door-to-door evangelism. Rather than repudiating traditional evangelism altogether, Dunkin suggests that evangelists should amalgamate traditional and non-traditional evangelism collectively. By this he means that door-to-door evangelism should be combined with direct mail, and direct mail should be combined with door-to-door evangelism. Dunkin further propounds that direct mail should be sent out first, and as potential converts visit the church, then door-to-door evangelism should follow thereafter.

This evangelistic methodology is antithetical to the traditional methodology of evangelism. According to the biblical tradition, Jesus commands his disciples to “go” to the houses first,¹⁶ but Hamilton and Hadaway perceive this evangelistic principle as superannuated. Therefore, they will not initiate in-home visitation without first using direct mail. They will only go to prospective proselytes’ homes after preexistent relationships have already been established through direct mail. Hamilton and Hadaway surmise that using traditional evangelism in today’s world would only be pointless, but Thomas Rainer thinks otherwise: “The issue...was not the receptivity of those visited, but the issue was the obedience of the church to “go’.”¹⁷ There are some pastors, clergy, and congregants who do not want to evangelize their lost communities. Some pastors only want to preach from the pulpit to those who are already saved. This is not evangelism. There is more to pastorship than preaching. If the churches are not

¹⁶ Luke 10:2-5.

¹⁷Rainer, *Effective Evangelistic Churches*, 41.

evangelizing, then how can they grow? If churches are not growing, then they might not be evangelizing.

Rick Warren of Saddleback Valley Community Church does not have a problem with evangelizing lost communities. He takes the evangelistic, “go,” to an entirely different level: a level where all churches need to go. He surveyed the lost communities in his neighborhood and asked his neighbors five germane questions. Then he formulated a letter based upon his survey questionnaire. Ultimately, he invited them to church.¹⁸ As a result, two hundred and five people attended his first church service and now he has a megachurch, which averages over 20,000 attendees each week. In comparison to Warren, Hamilton has a similar but different evangelistic approach. Hamilton chooses to send direct mail out first and then he initiates in-home visitation. Hamilton is a proponent of direct mail; he recommends consistency to his readers: “Do it well, do it positively, do it regularly, and send it to thousands of households.”¹⁹ After Hamilton makes his massive direct mail distribution, he then places a myriad of telephone calls to his first time visitors.²⁰ These telephone calls were made to set up in-home visitations. After the prospective disciples agreed to receive an initial visit in their homes, he then set up three visits per week, lasting forty-five minutes each. During these visits, they would share information about their personal lives and Hamilton would then answer any questions about the church. At the conclusion of the visit,

¹⁸Rick Warren, *The Purpose-Driven Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1985), 190-94.

¹⁹Hadaway, *Church Growth Principles*, 37.

²⁰Hadaway, *Church Growth Principles*, 25.

Hamilton would make an indelible impression on them by praying for them, giving them newsletters, and coffee mugs with the church's logo on them.²¹ These are cogent ways to persuade the prospective proselytes to become members of the Church of the Resurrection.

William Easum of Colonial Hills Methodist Church has a slightly different evangelistic method than Hamilton. Easum and Hamilton are convergent in the use of direct mail, but they are divergent in the way they make their second contact. After the prospective converts first come to church, the pastors would initiate their second contact within a twenty-four hours period.²² The idea is that the sooner the prospective proselytes are contacted, the sooner the likelihood that they will join the church.²³ They called this evangelistic approach "door-step visitation."²⁴ Instead of giving out coffee mugs like Hamilton, Easum gives plants called ivies to his prospective proselytes. The most impressive thing about Easum's ivies is that they are cheaper than Hamilton's coffee mugs. In 2002, when Hamilton wrote the book, *Leading beyond the Walls*, the coffee mugs cost from \$1.50 to \$2.50.²⁵ Now, they probably cost even more while Easum's ivies are still reasonably inexpensive. The congregants of the Colonial Hills Methodist Church grow their ivies at their homes, costing them pennies on the dollar.

²¹Hadaway, *Church Growth Principles*, 25.

²² William Easum, *The Church Growth Handbook* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1990), 91.

²³ Easum, *Church Growth Handbook*, 91.

²⁴ Easum, *Church Growth Handbook*, 91.

²⁵Hamilton, *Leading Beyond the Walls*, 56.

The only difference is that the plants do not have a church's logo on them; however, they are still a reminder to the proselytes that they have a new life in Christ.²⁶ Another impressive thing about Easum's church is that each person who receives a visit also receives a phone call, home visit, a letter sent from a pastor, a newsletter, and another check-call during midweek. One of the things that makes Colonial Hills Methodist Church a growing church is that after each visit a handwritten letter is sent to each visitor, inviting membership. Just prior to the next scheduled orientation another letter is sent out, requesting their attendance. For those who have not returned a second invitation is sent out, inviting them to revisit their church.²⁷

Stephen Compton has a well-organized evangelistic follow-up plan. During a normal church service, "accountability cards" are handed out to all church attendees, while newcomers are asked to fill out their phone numbers, addresses, and other relative contact information. These accountability cards are gleaned each Monday morning by the "Monday Morning Angels." They record the information on a master list. From their master list, they use pertinent information from those who have been absent from church attendance. Then, another evangelistic team comes in on Monday nights and visits the first-time visitors, those who missed church services, and those who reached the final level of visitation. In order to organize all the information that is gathered, they use a corkboard called system control. On this corkboard, there are three different levels: Level I, Level II, and Level III. After each visit, the prospective member is

²⁶Easum, *Church Growth Handbook*, 91.

²⁷Easum, *Church Growth Handbook*, 91-92

incrementally moved up to the next level. When the prospective member reaches Level III, he or she receives a visit from the pastor. At this juncture, the prospective member is at Level IV, which is the highest point of procuring membership.²⁸

Compton, Easum, Warren, Hamilton, and Hadaway all have proven that having a follow-up plan is a sure way of setting hooks in their prospective members and preventing them from slipping through their fingertips. The likelihood of prospective members returning the following Sunday without a viable follow-up plan is minimal. Aubrey Malphurs supports this view by stating: “They haven't been offended by the gospel or the sermon. Rather, they simply aren't in the habit of going to church! That's one of the reasons why they're unchurched!”²⁹ For this reason, an efficacious follow-up plan is the answer for this particular predicament. Anything less than an effective follow-up plan simply will not do. Robert Coleman agrees: “With such haphazard follow-up of believers, it is no wonder that about half of those who make professions and join the church eventually fall away or lose the glow of a Christian experience, and fewer still grow in sufficient knowledge and grace to be of any real service to the kingdom.”³⁰

Not only do pastors need to get people to come to church: they also need to help them remain there. In this way, they will be devotees of discipleship so that ultimately they can be evangelists for Christ. Billy Graham puts it another way: “The

²⁸Stephen Compton, *Growing New Churches*, (Nashville, TN: Discipleship Resources, 1982), 57-58.

²⁹Aubrey Malphurs, *Planting Growing Churches for the 21st Century: A Comprehensive Guide for New Churches and Those Desiring Renewal*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1998), 113.

³⁰ Robert Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Revell, 1993), 47.

Church, having come to Christ, is to go for Christ.”³¹ In order for this to happen, the church must be fully trained in evangelism. But first, the proselytes must make a commitment to discipleship and then successful evangelism can be fulfilled. If pastors would only properly train their congregants in discipleship, then reproducing disciple-makers will result. This is what is needed in all churches. Rather than placing emphasis on procuring genuine discipleship, some pastors are only concerned with adding new converts and members.³² In the short-term, this seems to promote numerical growth, but in the long-term it demotes spiritual growth. If the congregants are not growing spiritually and numerically, then they are not maturing in faith and practice.³³ There should be equal emphasis on both spiritual and numerical growth. Numerical growth is just as important as spiritual growth because numbers are people and numbers matter to God.³⁴ Likewise, spiritual growth is just as important as numerical growth because people are spiritual beings and spiritual growth matters to God.³⁵ Hence, a successful growing church will strive to achieve both spiritual and numerical maturity. In this way, there will be a balance for both dimensions so that the scales of evangelism and discipleship will not be tipped. For example, if too much emphasis is placed on spiritual

³¹Billy Graham as quoted in *Evangelism Explosion*, James Kennedy and T. M. Moore (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1983), vii.

³²Colman, *Master Plan of Evangelism*, 47.

³³Bruce Grubbs, *Helping a Small Church Grow* (Nashville, TN: Convention Press, 1980), 9.

³⁴James White, *Opening the Front Door: Worship and Church Growth* (Nashville, TN: Convention Press, 1992), 114-115. Acts 2:41; 4:4; 19:10.

³⁵ 2 Peter 3:18; 1 Corinthians 11:1; Luke 9:23.

growth, then the church is not growing numerically.³⁶ Similarly, if too much emphasis is placed on numerical growth, then the church is not growing spiritually.³⁷ In observing the Great Commission, Jesus stresses a balanced emphasis on both numerical and spiritual growth.³⁸

In attempting to regenerate the unchurched, I am using some key words of the Great Commission for Christian didactics. For example, I have supplanted the word, “go,” with the word, “evangelize” from Ken Hemphill’s threefold strategy. The word, “assimilate” is supplanted with the word, “baptize.” And the words, “teach them to obey,” are supplanted with the word, “teachings.”³⁹ Doing this will help me towards my goal of inculcating an effective method of evangelism. If the churches are not going out to find unbelievers (Evangelism), making them part of the body of believers (Assimilation), and training them in reproducing disciples-makers (Discipleship), then they are just exacerbating the problem by not following the example of the Early Church. Even worse, they are being disobedient to the Great Commission. Their deficient erudition in evangelism, assimilation, and discipleship may be the reasons why today’s churches are not growing effectively. If the churches are incompetent in evangelism, there will be no or little training in discipleship, nor will evangelists go out

³⁶ Herb Miller, *Church for the Unchurched*, (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1996), 29.

³⁷ White, *Opening the Front Door*, 114-115.

³⁸ Matthew 28:19-20.

³⁹ Ken Hemphill, *Great Commission: Revitalizing the Sunday Morning Dinosaur: A Sunday School Growth Strategy for the 21st Century* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996), 37.

to evangelize the lost. This could only mean that the lost are not coming to church or being saved. If churches are deficient in assimilation, there is little or no commitment to the body of Christ, and there will be little or no commitment to performing for Christ. If churches are deficient in discipleship teachings or training, there will be no spiritual growth and the congregants will not make any deep transformational changes. This could only lead to spiritual starvation. Evangelism, assimilation, and discipleship are indispensable prerequisites for church growth. Churches that are lacking in these vital evangelistic prerequisites may have difficulty in growing numerically or spiritually. This may be the problem with many of churches across this nation. They do not have sufficient discipleship training⁴⁰ and thus it is probable that the Church is incompetent in making reproducing disciple-makers.⁴¹ There may be some churches that are finding prospective disciples, but they do not have the didactic wherewithal to train these disciples to become reproducing disciple-makers.

There are some churches that rely on Sunday services and membership training classes as their means of promoting discipleship.⁴² This may be the reason why the converts and senior Christians do not share their faith: they have not been fully trained in discipleship, evangelism, and witnessing. Then, there are those who have received training in evangelism, and they still do not share their faith. George Hunter says it convincingly:

⁴⁰Miller, *Church for the Unchurched*, 24.

⁴¹Miller, *Church for the Unchurched*, 24.

⁴²Coleman, *Master Plan of Evangelism*, 47.

The Christian movement still has too few laborers to gather the harvest. In most traditional churches, we ask our people to share the good news and invite people to church involvement, and they don't do it. In many traditional churches, we admonish our people to share the faith and invite, and they don't do it. In some traditional churches, we provide good evangelism training; the people take the training, and like it, and believe it is very important, but they still don't do it!⁴³

Hunter addresses evangelistic training, but he does not address discipleship training. In his ministry, Jesus first trained his followers to be committed disciples and then he sent them out to evangelize. Jesus shows in the Great Commission that discipleship and evangelism are inseparable. In observing Jesus's ministry it is clear that training in discipleship came before evangelism. If evangelists can get proselytes to commit themselves to discipleship, then they will also be committed to evangelism.

Bruce Grubbs gives the sequential order of church growth: "Church growth is the divine-human process of adding to a church those who are saved through Jesus Christ, equipping them for responsible discipleship resulting in witnessing, ministering, and establishing new fellowships of believers."⁴⁴ James White agrees with Bruce Grubbs: "Church growth also refers to the spiritual growth of the church. Churches grow in spiritual maturity and obedience. As a church grows in faith and knowledge, it increases its ability to impact the world for Christ."⁴⁵ Ken Hemphill does not like using the term "church growth" because: "Church growth is not our goal; obedience to the Great Commission is our goal. When we are obedient to the Great Commission, church growth

⁴³George Hunter, *Church for the Unchurched* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1996), 24.

⁴⁴ Grubbs, *Helping a Small Church Grow*, 9.

⁴⁵White, *Opening the Front Door*, 114-115.

will be the natural result.”⁴⁶ Hemphill may be playing with semantics here, but his point is well taken. In many cases, people are sensitive when the term “church growth” is used. For them, church growth seems to connote a concern for adding members to the church—not having a concern to save them, but to bring monetary savings in the church. Conversely, the term Great Commission usually connotes adding the lost to the body of Christ—not to promote revenue, but to have a genuine concern for the lost. When the pastor is more concerned with adding people to the church, for the sake of promoting revenue, people may be skeptical about supporting such a cause.

In his citation above, White does not use the term “discipleship,” but he does use the terms, “spiritual maturity and obedience.” These words are, in many ways, synonymous with the word, “discipleship.” Both White and Grubbs realize that discipleship is at the core of evangelism. If churches are to grow, then discipleship is a must because without effective discipleship training there will be little or no commitment to evangelize the lost. This is exactly what is happening in our United States: there is little witnessing for the cause of Christ. Some pastors put more emphasis on the saved folks on the inside of churches, rather than saving the lost folks on the outside of churches.

Steve Dunkin seems to think that evangelists are not interested in sharing the gospel for Christ or the lost.⁴⁷ While it is true that there are those who are not interested in sharing Jesus Christ and his gospel, there are others who are interested in

⁴⁶ Hemphill, *Sunday Morning Dinosaur*, 50.

⁴⁷Dunkin, *Church Advertising*, 36-37.

sharing the good news. Somehow, church leaders must encourage these congregants to evangelize—even though they may think that the congregants might say, “no.”⁴⁸

Church leaders must teach the congregants that they have the same burden of responsibility as the disciples of Christ. They are commanded to “go,” just like the disciples of Christ.⁴⁹ It would be helpful if church leaders would equip their congregants with comprehensive training in discipleship and evangelism. In this way, they would no longer be passively running in and out of church each Sunday; instead, they would be actively participating in evangelistic functions. Leith Anderson supports this evangelistic view by saying: “The secret to continual growth, say the experts, is to always be building on past success and never allowing the congregation to become satisfied with the status quo.”⁵⁰

Most modern-day evangelists are not performing door-to-door evangelism because they conjecture that it will achieve little or no results.⁵¹ So, they will not sow their evangelistic seeds into the rich fields of their lost communities. They would rather take the advice of authors who have not sown in their fields rather than finding out for themselves if the seeds will indeed sprout. Even if they have thrown many seeds and only a few have sprouted up that soil is worthy of sowing. It is far better to reap a few

⁴⁸Hamilton. *Leading beyond the Walls*, 52.

⁴⁹ Matthew 28:19-20.

⁵⁰Leith Anderson, *A Church for the 21st Century: How to Bring Change to your Church* (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House Publishers, 1992), 154.

⁵¹Rainer, *Effective Evangelistic Churches*, 41.

for Christ than none at all. Christ is not going to get angry with evangelists for trying, but he may get angry with them for not trying at all.

One has to admit that rejection does not come easily for the average person. This is the human condition. For some, rejection comes easily, and for others, it is difficult to bear.⁵² Some might take it personally—and who can blame them? Who wants to hear the slamming of the phone or the door in your face? Is not this the high cost of discipleship that every disciple of Christ must pay? Does not Christ say: “You will be hated by everyone because of me.”⁵³ Therefore, it is only reasonable to expect this reaction and evangelists should not take it so personally. If the disciples of Christ experienced rejections in their generation, should not the disciples of Christ of this generation anticipate rejection? Evangelists should not allow the repudiations of the lost and unchurched to affect their evangelistic aspirations or requirements.⁵⁴ Today’s evangelists should factor in residents’ disapproval and even condemnation when evangelizing and realize that non-Christians are doing what non-Christians do. They are just trying to preserve and protect their sinful proclivities. The unchurched love their sinful lifestyles, and they will do and say anything to practice it (John 3:19-20).⁵⁵ To follow Christ they would have to relinquish not only their sinful addictions, but their

⁵²Peter Wagner, *Church Planting for a Greater Harvest: A Comprehensive Guide* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1990), 101.

⁵³ Matthew 10:22.

⁵⁴George Barna, *Grow Your Church from the Outside In: Understanding the Unchurched and How to Reach Them* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2002), 94.

⁵⁵ John 3:19-20.

sinful friends. Initially, this might seem insurmountable for the unchurched. In their initial failed attempt, they might feel a sense of defeat, or even think of themselves as hypocrites. The indelible grips of their addictions might debilitate them in such a way that they might feel powerless, and thereby unable break free. So, they will not try again. They will just say, “no” to Christ and “no” to whosoever asked them about Him.

In conclusion, Hadaway, Hamilton, and Dunkin seem to think that direct mail is the most optimal approach for reaching the lost for Christ. They cite evidence such as gated communities and high-rise apartments as deterrents for spreading the gospel door-to-door. In addition, they believe that times have changed and people are no longer comfortable receiving unannounced visits from strangers. This may be true in part, but not everyone will receive visitors in this fashion. Besides, this is not the evangelistic directive giving by Jesus in the Great Commission. The critical question is: should evangelists follow the instructions set by our Lord, or should they rewrite the Great Commission by “sending” out direct mail?

Some might even say: what difference does it make if the end justifies the means? It is not as if these churches are not growing into megachurches. These evangelists are raking in megachurch results by using direct mail. Perhaps this is the reason why these evangelistic pundits are saying that the Lord’s way is superannuated and modern times have rightfully jettisoned traditional evangelistic methods. In these days, the old way of evangelism is fighting for its very survival. For this reason, there are some evangelists who would not even attempt to use traditional evangelism in their churches. But, in defense of the traditional way of evangelism, there is not one citation

in all of Hadaway, Hamilton, and Dunkin to suggest that they have actually tried traditional evangelistic methods in their churches—nor do they cite anyone who has tried it. So, how would they know if traditional evangelistic methodology work? Then, there is Paul Powell who disagrees with the modern evangelistic methodologies of Hadaway, Hamilton, and Dunkin by stating, “People just don’t walk in our church...they come because we first go out to visit them.”⁵⁶ While it may be true that the churches of Hadaway, Hamilton, and Dunkin have grown as the result of using direct mail, it may also be true that their churches could have grown even more by using traditional methods alongside of modern ones. Cults such as the Jehovah Witnesses use aggressive traditional evangelistic methodologies, and their churches have grown exponentially. Therefore, this study that finds that both types of evangelistic methodologies should be used in church evangelistic practices.

There is the notion that modern methods are the most optimal approach to effective evangelism, and traditional methods are the least effective. However, if church leaders will lead the congregants to the highways and hedges, then the congregants will follow. Churches are led to grow by effective leaders! The church will grow with the approval of their leaders to evangelize, and it can grow far and beyond the vision of its leaders (Ephes. 3:20). It is the church leader who leads and inspires others to join the evangelistic team. If churches are to be effective for the cause of Christ, then it is absolutely necessary for church leaders to promote evangelism. Otherwise, the church

⁵⁶Paul Powell, *The Nuts and Bolts of Church Growth* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1982), 49.

leaders are waving the evangelistic banner of decline. Thomas Rainer shares a story about a deacon of a particular church who speaks about the significant difference that his pastor's evangelistic leadership caused:

"Our pastor," the deacon shared, "did not just tell us to be evangelistic. He lived it! It took his example and leadership over five years before the church caught on. But we eventually got excited about sharing Jesus." The church has grown consistently now for a decade. And a significant portion of that growth has been conversion growth.⁵⁷

If the church is to function in an efficient manner, then pastoral leadership needs to somehow incite its members to participate in church growth. Many congregants do not witness because they do not know how to witness. If they were truly encouraged, edified, and equipped in discipleship and evangelism, then they would be conscientious, confident, and courageous to witness—by word of mouth or direct mail.

⁵⁷Rainer, *Effective Evangelistic Churches*, 43.

CHAPTER FOUR

PROJECT DESIGN

As a member of Mount Olive Baptist Church in Manakin-Sabot, VA, I did not see any evidences of spiritual and numerical growth in this church. I only saw spiritual and numerical declination. The few parishioners who were attending MOBC; they were actually threatening to discontinue their membership. I believe if they had inculcated discipleship and evangelism in their ministry. They would have experienced spiritual and numerical growth, rather than spiritual declination. At this particular time, I was not an erudite in evangelism and discipleship. So, I matriculated into Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, in order to procure knowledge in discipleship and evangelism. As of now, I have learned a lot about discipleship and evangelism. In my learning, I was surprised to discover, there were some authors who oppose door-to-door evangelism. They believe that door-to-door evangelism will produce nominal results. For me, this was hard to accept, so I decided not to rely on their opinions, alone. Instead, I decided to test their theory by conducting surveys from the residents of my community. In this way, I was able to discover what is the best way to evangelize in church recruitment: door-to-door, telephone, advertisement, or direct mail in the context of Henrico County, VA.

I have taking two sample survey collections. In the first sample collection, I have randomly asked 102 people at local businesses in the community of Henrico, Virginia to

participate in survey 1.¹ In the second sample collection, I have procured twenty residents in my local residential community by knocking door-to-door to participate in survey 2.² These two sample collections will help me to determine the residents' preferred way of evangelism. By using this information, I will be able to determine if door-to-door evangelism is the optimal way of evangelism in my communal context. Even if, door-to-door evangelism is not the residents' preferred method of evangelism, I hope to find out what is the best way to evangelize from these surveys.

The statistical implement that I will be using to evaluate residents' responses is software called Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, otherwise known as SPSS. IBM makes this statistical software, and it is renowned for conducting statistical analysis for high-profile businesses and students. SPSS has tremendous capabilities, such as linear regression, descriptive, and bivariate analysis schematics. Since SPSS has an exorbitant price tag, mostly marketing, academic, and governmental vocational agencies utilize this software. For those who do not want to pay this exorbitant price tag, one might get tempted to use Excel, but one must keep in mind that Excel is not designed for statistical analysis, and it is not comprehensive as SPSS.

SPSS is a far better choice for statistical analysis and interpretation. While SPSS is intricate statistic software for data input, yet it has a simple reader-friendly statistical interface for easy interpretation and readability.

Many thanks to IBM, for they have made it possible for students to utilize a trial

¹ See Appendix B.

² See Appendix C.

version for two weeks. I have taken total advantage of utilizing the trial version, since it did not cost me anything, other than time. Fortunately for me, I already had previous training while I was a student at Regent University. I was surprised how I have recollected the intricate details of this phenomenal software without any academic tutorage. This is a great resource for my dissertation analysis. In this project design, I will be using reports, graphs, and descriptive statistics. I think SPSS will be beneficial for making improvements, solving evangelistic declination, and making ecclesiastic predictions for my futuristic ecclesiastic context. Hence, I will be using SPSS as way of conducting statistical analysis for door-to-door evangelism. It is my belief that SPSS will be a viable implement in helping me answer the question: Can door-to-door evangelism be a viable way to evangelize in our modern society? Below is a formation of how I underwent the process of research.

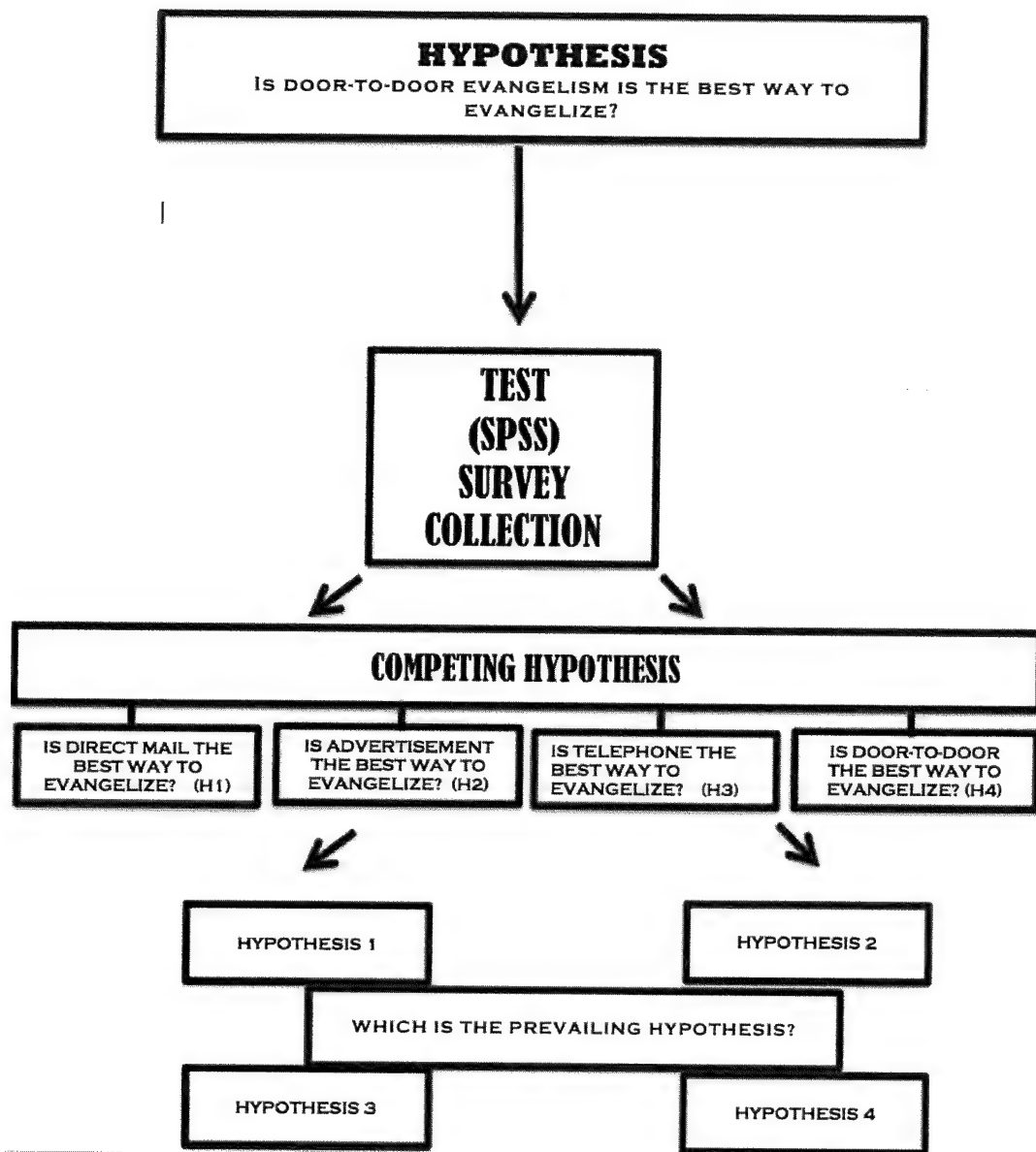


Figure 6. The Process

In the figure 6, it shows a sequential procedure for testing my hypothesis. The first sequence is the question of my hypothesis: Is door-to-door evangelism is the best way to evangelize? Following the first sequence is second sequence, which is how I am going to test my hypothesis and utilize the statistical software, SPSS for my research methodology. The hypothesis that I want to test is door-to-door evangelism. The other

competing three hypotheses are, (1) is direct mail the best way to evangelize. Or (2), is advertisement the best way to evangelize? Lastly (3), is telephone the best way to evangelize? After testing the four hypothesis, this study will determine the best way to evangelize the populace by asking the question: Which is the prevailing hypothesis based upon testable results?

	Confidence level = 95%			Confidence level = 99%		
	Margin of error			Margin of error		
Population size	5%	2,5%	1%	5%	2,5%	1%
100	80	94	99	87	96	99
500	217	377	475	285	421	485
1.000	278	606	906	399	727	943
10.000	370	1.332	4.899	622	2.098	6.239
100.000	383	1.513	8.762	659	2.585	14.227
500.000	384	1.532	9.423	663	2.640	16.055
1.000.000	384	1.534	9.512	663	2.647	16.317

Table 1. Confidence Level

For pragmatic purposes, this above sample size table will be used for this exercise. In looking at the population size section. The population size ranges from 100 to 1,000,000. The surveyor is the one who selects the population size that he or she wants to administer to the populace. In this pragmatic exercise, I have chosen 102 respondents to represent door-to-door evangelism. In the confidence level section of this schematic illustration, one should note that there are two confidence options: 95% and 99%. The confidence level determines how much confident does the surveyor wants to ensure reliability for his or her survey. The goal is to get as close to 100% as possible.

So, the higher the confidence level the surveyor chooses to 100%; then, the higher the confidence the surveyor will have in his or her survey distribution. For example, in the two alternative confident levels: 95% and 99%. The closer the surveyor wants a confidence level to 100%, the more people needed to be surveyed. Hypothetically, if I only wanted to sample 80 people, then, the margin of error would be only 5%. A sample size of 383 people, can actually represent 10, 000 people.

In the month of September 2014, I have administered 102 surveys randomly in Henrico, Virginia; there were 102 respondents that completed the survey. Thus, the response rate yielded 102%, which means the margin of error is 0%.

Are you actively attending church?

N	Valid	102
	Missing	0
Mode		Yes

Figure 7A. Church Attendance

In figure 7A, the question: “Are you actively attending church” has been surveyed. The alpha character “N” represents the number. In the “valid” section, there were 102 people that were actually surveyed. Whereas, in the “missing” section, there were no “missing” values that were not surveyed. The “mode” represents the respondents’ choices: yes or no. In this particular schematic, most of the people who participated in this survey selected “yes” for the question: “Are you actively attending church?” Most of the people surveyed, were churchgoers.

Are you actively attending church?

		Frequency	% %	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Yes	75	73.5	73.5	73.5
	No	27	26.5	26.5	100.0
	Total	102	100.0	100.0	

Figure 7B. Church Attendance

Figure 7B exhibits the total number of people that were actually surveyed and their preferred mode to the question: "Are you actively attending church?" In observation of the "valid %" section, there are only two possible selections: "yes" or "no." In the frequency section, the respondents who have chosen "yes" or "no," are separated to show the distinction between the two responses. For example, the mode, "yes," is clearly differentiated from the frequency of 75 people, and "no" is clearly differentiated from the frequency of 27 people. Note: in diagram3b, not only does it determine the frequency of people, but it also determines the percentages of the diametrical modes. In this case, it converts the frequency of the number 75 to 73.5% of the mode, "yes." Conversely, the number 27 is also converted to 26.5% of the mode, "no." The question: Are you actively attending church, 75. 5% of the people have chosen "yes" and 26.5% of the people have chosen "no." Since I am more concerned about those who are not churchgoer, then I will focus my attention on the non-churchgoers.

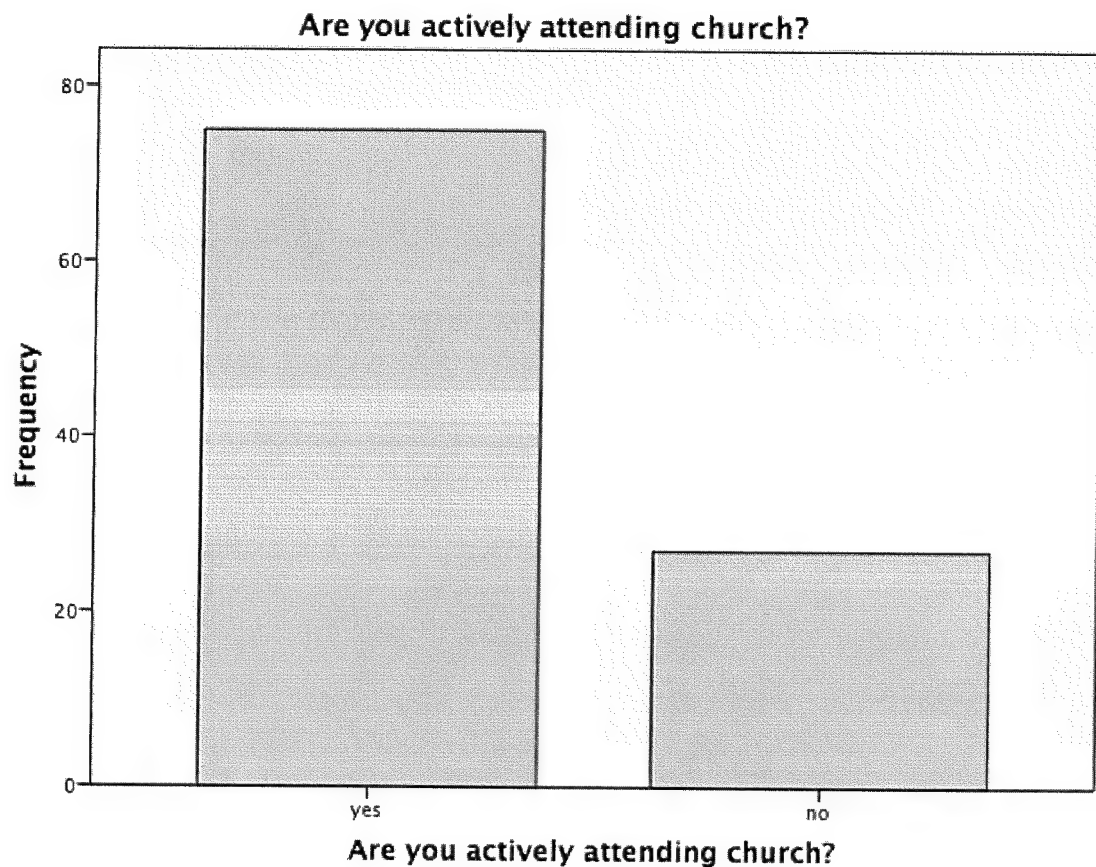


Figure 7C. Church Attendance

The above graph reflects the total number of frequency of people surveyed. The people were given two dichotomous options. They could either select "yes" or "no" for their predilections. In the inquiry of "Are you actively attending church?" The frequency of 75 people who voted, "yes," to the inquiry, "Are you actively attending church" to those 27 people whom were diametrically opposed by voting, "no." This graph perspicuously points to the mode "yes" as the preferred predilection for all of the 102 respondents.

What do you think is the greatest need in this area?

N	Valid	102
	Missing	0
Mode		Recreation center

Figure 8A. Greatest Need in This Area

In figure 8A, the question: "What do you think is the greatest need in this area?"

The alpha character "N" represents the number. In the "valid" section, there were 102 people that were actually surveyed. In the "missing" section, there were no missing values that were not surveyed. The "mode" represents, in this case, choice. The prevailing mode in response to the question: "What do you think is the greatest need in this area," is "recreation center." Therefore, most of the people preferred a recreation center as their choices.

What do you think is the greatest need in this area?

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Day care center	11	10.8	10.8	10.8
	Recreation center	49	48.0	48.0	58.8
	Church	36	35.3	35.3	94.1
	Movie theater	6	5.9	5.9	100.0
	Total	102	100.0	100.0	

Figure 8B. Greatest Need in This Area

In figure 8B, it is perspicuous that recreation center is the first choice for most of the respondents. It came in with a frequency of 49 people, which is 48% of all the people's predilections for "the greatest need in the area." Surprisingly, coming in second place, was the church with a frequency of 36, and it had 35.3% of the votes. Daycare has consumed 10.8% of the votes, with a frequency of 11 votes. Lastly, those who thought

the greatest need in the area, was a movie theater, have collected 6 votes. This brings in the remainder of 5.9% that is needed to complete the cumulative total of 100%.

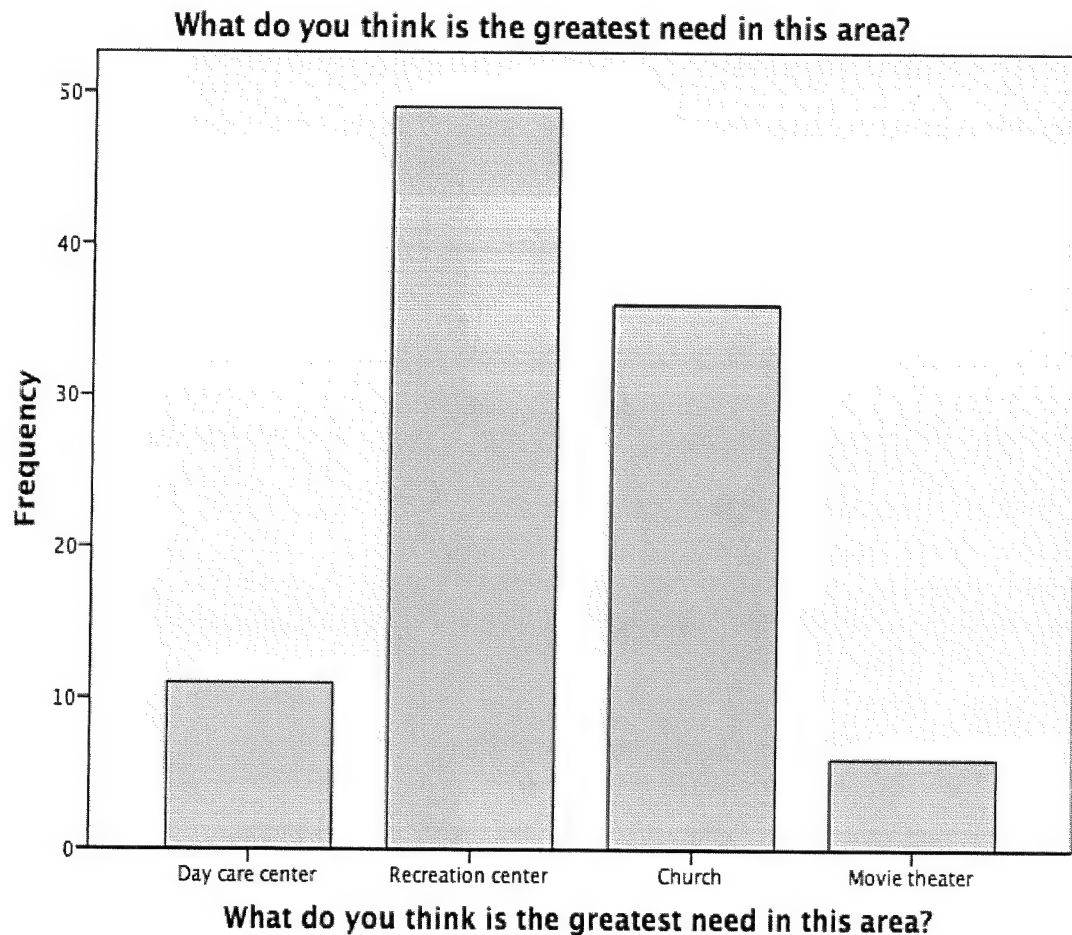


Figure 8C. Greatest Need in This Area

In the above frequency chart, as mentioned earlier, recreation center has garnered 49 respondents as the greatest need in the area. Since “Movie Theater” is a form of recreation, it could reasonably be amalgamated with “recreation center.” That being the case, the sum of the frequency 49 (recreation center) plus 5 respondents (Movie Theater), is a total of 55 respondents. Over 53.5% of the respondents desire to be entertained. Some of the respondents have chosen “recreation center” as their

number one pastime predilection. They even have said, “We have enough churches in the area,” but when I told them that the churches in the area do not have sound biblical teachings: They replied, “You are right.” This opened up the dialogue about my hopes of planting a church with sound biblical teachings. But, as I was talking to them, I could not help, but to think: If they had planted a church themselves, it would probably be a church of entertainment. People just do not want to be bored. This also made me think that I need to find ways to get their attention, to keep them awake, but I cannot compromise the Word of God.

If you were looking for a church, what things would you be looking for?

N	Valid	102
	Missing	0
Mode		Sound biblical teaching

Figure 9A. Church You Are Looking For

In Figure 9A, the question: “If you were looking for a church, what things would you be looking for?” has been surveyed. In the “valid” section, there were 102 people who were actually surveyed. The alpha character “N” represents the number. Whereas, in the “missing” section, there were no “missing” values that were not surveyed. The “mode” represents, in this case, choice. The prevailing choice in the question “If you were looking for a church, what things would you be looking for?” Most of the respondents selected, “sound biblical teaching,” as their preferred choice.

If you were looking for a church, what things would you be looking for?

	Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid Worship	26	25.5	25.5	25.5
Sound biblical teaching	46	45.1	45.1	70.6
Fellowship	22	21.6	21.6	92.2
Small group ministry	8	7.8	7.8	100.0
Total	102	100.0	100.0	

Figure 9B. Church You Are Looking For

In figure 9B, "Sound biblical teaching" came in first-place with a frequency of 46 respondents, which is 45.1% of the total respondents. Following "sound biblical teaching," is "worship," which garnered a frequency of 26, and it is 25.5% of total respondents. Almost going neck-to-neck with "worship," is "fellowship," bringing in a frequency of 22, which is 21.6% of the respondents. Dragging behind in last-place is, "small group ministry," it has only a frequency of 8 and is 7.8% of the total respondents.

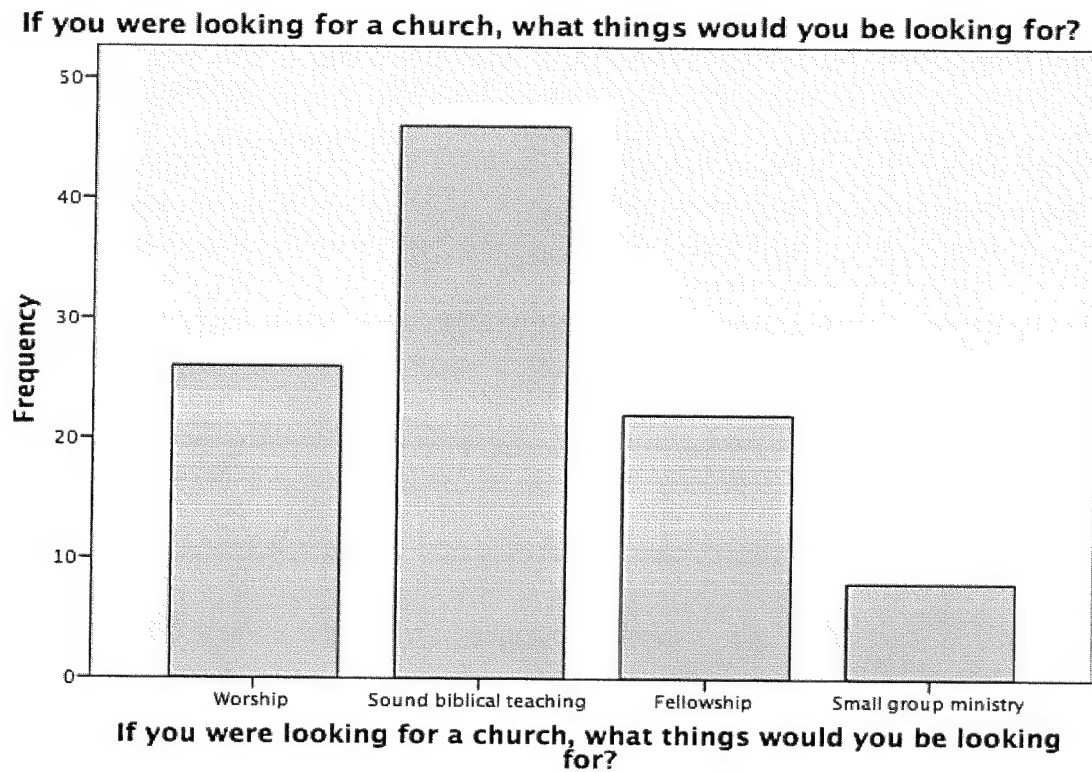


Figure 9C. Church You Are Looking For

These results are somewhat surprisingly unexpected. Initially, I thought that “small group ministry” would have swallowed up more votes than what is reflected in diagram chart 5c. Small groups are very efficacious in building up the body of Christ. Without small groups, people will be lost in the congregation. There will be no sense of accountability in congregational services, and there will be no way of evaluating congregants’ performances. In most church services that I have attended, it is basically a lecture, not a discussion. There is no dialogue between the pastor and the congregants. Congregants would only come to church, just to listen to the pastoral message without any congregational confrontation. If someone has a question or having problems comprehending or applying the pastoral message to daily living, who then will give him or her wise counsel to his or her question? If congregants cannot get the cannot get the

right answer to their problems, then the message will be relegated to a didactic sermon without any hope of holy conduct. "Too often the church exhorts, but it does not train. It preaches but does not equip," says Hestenes. "Small groups can help solve the problem. Among all the varied facets of a church's program, small group provides a place where questions and doubts can be raised in a supportive environment."³ On top of that, small groups can also make provision for maintaining retention. This is highly comprehensible when considering the fact; that, most congregants do not feel they have a significant relationship with other congregants of the church. Unless of course, the congregants feel that they are making some type of contribution to overall function of the church.⁴ This is so indispensable for new believers. Some of their backgrounds stem from nefarious homogeneous groups, such as drug, promiscuous, and criminal activities. In jettisoning these nefarious groups, proselytes may get the premonition that they are about to embark on a life of reclusion. But, small groups can change all of that, by replacing these nefarious groups with pious small groups. In this way, it can help people who have been broken up or have been broke down from their sinful habits. Instead of being with the brokenhearted, they can be with the over-comers. These are the mature Christians who have overcome their egregious behaviors and addictions by applying spiritual principles and practices to aid their recovery. As the mature Christians have received love; now, they can return the favor by giving love in return and by

³Roberta Hestenes, "Small Groups and the Revitalization of the Church" *Theology News and Notes* (October, 1977): 29.

⁴William Easum, *The Church Growth Handbook* (Nashville, TN,: Abingdon, 1990), 37.

helping their fellowmen through the recovery process.

In spite of the significance of small groups, it did not do well favorably. However, sound biblical teaching did do favorably well. I was extremely impressed with the “sound teaching” results. This is my passion, and this is where I will deliver sound teachings to propitiate the congregants’ spiritual needs.

“Worship” received, on the other hand, mediocre results. It has a percentage of 25.5%. Worship is an integral component of the five-functions ministry and should not be overlooked. Worship is all about attempting to bring God’s presence into church’s services. Gene Mimms says: “True worship should lead worshipers to a deeper appreciation for God, a better understanding of His ways, and a deeper commitment to Him. Encountering God’s presence in worship transform congregants more and more into His likeness.”⁵ If, the presence of God is in church’s functionality, lives will change, the lost will be saved, and God will ultimately be glorified. That is why churches should not relegate worship service to a mere cost reduction by employing musicians who cannot perform and singers who cannot sing.⁶ But, great singers who can sing and musicians who can perform, may very well incite commitment, righteous activity, and bring spiritual growth to the body of Christ.⁷

In a sense, “fellowship” can be equated with small group ministry, but “small

⁵Gene Mimms, *Kingdom Principles for Church Growth* (Nashville, TN: Lifeway Press, 2001), 57.

⁶C. Hadaway, *Church Growth Principles: Separating Fact from Fiction* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1991), 68.

⁷ Hadaway, *Church Growth Principles*, 68.

group ministry” deals with the didactic activity, whereas “fellowship” deals mostly with small or large group entertainment activity. But, in using small group ministry, congregants will be able to foster a spiritual relationship with God and other believers.⁸ Furthermore, small group ministries will show commonality and thereby strengthen outreach ministries. In looking at the above graph, it shows that respondents, who took this survey, thought that “small group ministry” and “fellowship” were not the most efficacious groups. Again, these are the top choices of the respondents; it is probable that they do not know the importance of the “Five Function Ministries.” Churches should have the “five function ministries” functioning fruitfully in their congregation.

Rick Warren called these the five dimensions of Church Growth by saying:

- 1 Churches grow *warmer* through fellowship.
- 2 Churches grow *deeper* through discipleship.
- 3 Churches grow *stronger* through worship.
- 4 Churches grow *broadier* through ministry.
- 5 Churches grow *larger* through evangelism.⁹

This should be the aim of all churches to have the “five function ministries” in their churches.

⁸Gene Mimms, *Kingdom Principles for Church Growth* (Nashville, TN: Lifeway Press, 2001), 44.

⁹Rick Warren, *Purpose Driven Church*. (Grand Rapid, MI: Zondervan, 1995), 49.

Why do you think most people don't attend church?		
N	Valid	102
	Missing	0
Mode		Laziness

Figure 10A. Why People Do Not Attend Church

In asking the question, "Why do you think most people don't attend church?"

"Laziness" was the preferred mode.

Why do you think most people don't attend church?					
		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	They don't believe in God	11	10.8	10.8	10.8
	Laziness	44	43.1	43.1	53.9
	Hypocrisy	29	28.4	28.4	82.4
	No one asked them to go	18	17.6	17.6	100.0
	Total	102	100.0	100.0	

Figure 10B. Why People Do Not Attend Church

"Laziness" came in first-place with a frequency of 44 respondents, which is 43.1% of the total respondents. Following "laziness," is "hypocrisy," which garnered a frequency of 29, and it is 28.4% of total respondents. Coming in third place is "No one asked them to go," it brought in a frequency of 18, which is 17.6% of the respondents. Finally, in last-place and the least of these is, "They don't believe in God," it has only a frequency of 11 and is 10.8% of the total respondents.

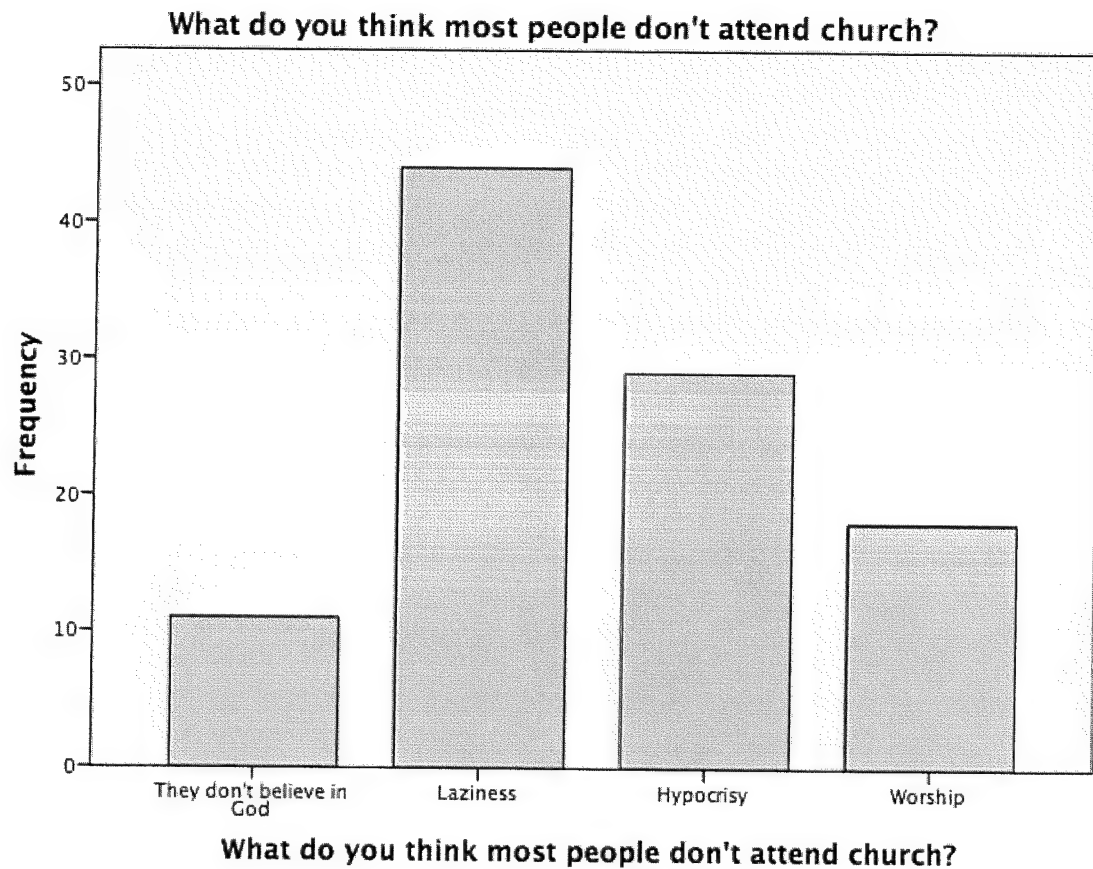


Figure 10C. Why People Do Not Attend Church

As we can see, “laziness” towers above the rest. Aubrey Malphurs makes a cogent point about the unchurched, as they are not being in the habit of going to church.¹⁰ He goes on to say that the culpability is not the pastor, sermon, or the advertising campaign; rather the unchurched are simply not churchgoing practitioners.¹¹ A good follow-up program can correct this problem. What is a follow-up program? It is a plan to galvanize the unchurched to attend church regularly. Another way of correcting

¹⁰Aubrey Malphurs, *The Problem: Planting Growing Churches for the 21st Century: A Comprehensive Guide for New Churches and Those Desiring Renewal* (Grand Rapid, MI: Baker Books, 1998), 113.

¹¹ Malphurs, *Problem*, 333.

the problem of low attendance is a plan that Steve Dunkin called *flighting*.¹² This is where the church attendances have reached a low ebb. As a result, churches then utilize advertisement campaign to offset against poor attendances.¹³

The second reason why people don't go to church is, "hypocrisy." In Barna's survey, the number one reason why people don't go to church is, "hypocrisy, but in my survey the number one reason is, "laziness." These are surveys on what people surmised about why they think people are not going church. This is not to say that this is the actual reason why people are not going to church.

The third reason for people not going to church is, "no one asked them to go." This is a grave problem in the church. The church is not evangelizing and congregants are not sharing their faith. The purpose of this survey and this thesis is to change this evangelistic predicament.

The fourth reason for people not going to church is, "They don't believe in God." Again, this is subjective opinion of the respondents. A good way to determine if they believe in God is to ask them.

Does it bother you for someone to knock on your door to talk about Christianity?		
N	Valid	102
	Missing	0
Mode		No

Figure 11A. Knocking on Door

¹² Steve Dunkin, *Church Attendance Fluctuations: Church Advertising: A Practical Guide*. (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1982), 44.

¹³ Dunkin, *Church Advertising*, 44.

In the question: “Does it bother you for someone to knock on your door to talk about Christianity,” the preferred mode for most of the 102 respondents is “no.”

Does it bother you for someone to knock on your door to talk about Christianity?

	Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid Yes	45	44.1	44.1	44.1
No	57	55.9	55.9	100.0
Total	102	100.0	100.0	

Figure 11B. Knocking on Door

In the question: “Does it bother you for someone to knock on your door to talk about Christianity,” the frequency for the answer, “yes,” gained 45 of the respondents’ votes, whereas the respondents who selected, “no,” gained 57 of the total votes. I did not separate church from unchurched, which may make for a higher level of approval.

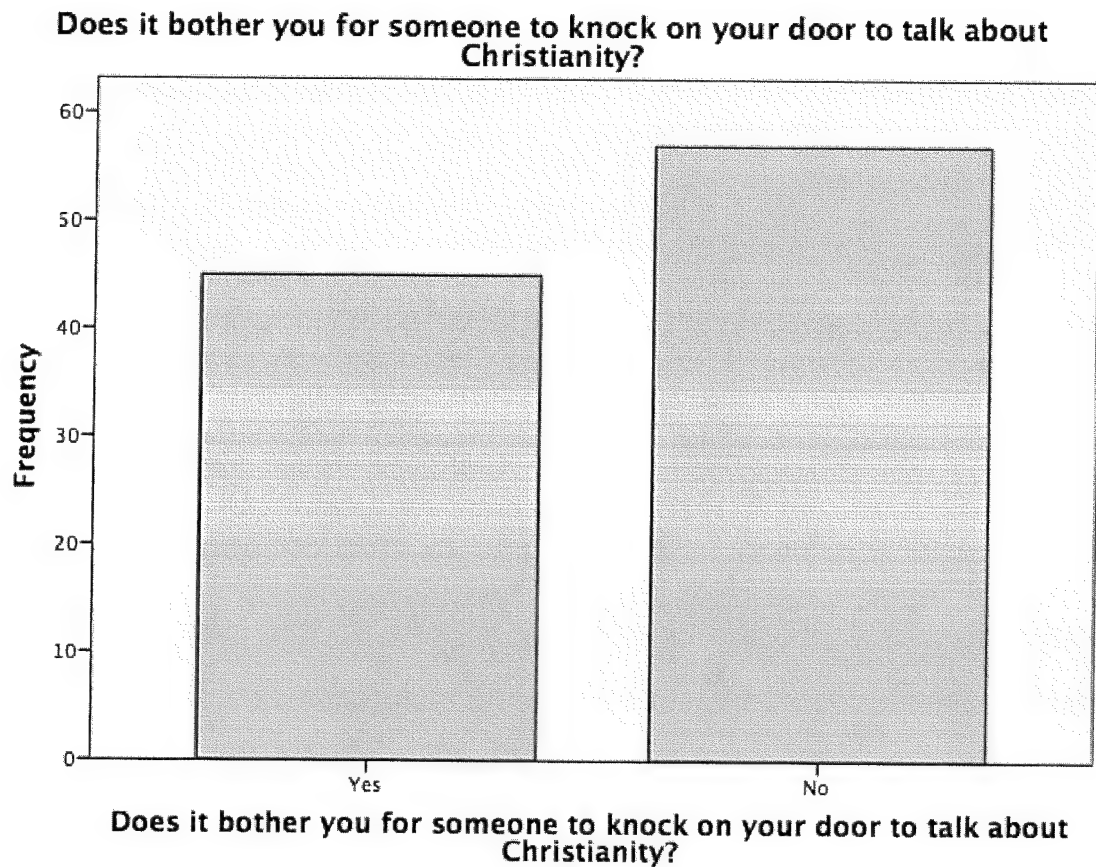


Figure 11C. Knocking on Door

According to the results of the survey, it shows that door-to-door evangelism is a legitimate way to evangelize in the ministerial context of Henrico, VA. Yet, Hadaway, Dunkin, and Hamilton assert that door-to-door is waning.¹⁴ The survey results show that there are people who are positive about door-to-door evangelism. Just because these authors think that door-to-door evangelism is waning, readers should look

¹⁴Kirk Hadaway, *Church Growth Principles: Separating Facts from Fiction* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1991), 25. Dunkin, *Church Advertising*, 27. Adam Hamilton. *Leading beyond the Walls: Developing Congregations with a Heart for the Unchurched* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2002), 56.

meticulously in their book to determine if they actually underwent door-to-door evangelism in their ministerial context. Without evidences, they do not have authority to make such unsupported assertions. Such statements can actually hinder the gospel, rather to advance it.

What do you think is the right approach in our community to share the gospel of Christ?

N	Valid	102
	Missing	0
Mode		Advertisement

Figure 12A. Right Approach to Share the Gospel

The preferred mode is, "advertisement."

What do you think is the right approach in our community to share the gospel of Christ?

	Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid Door-to-door	33	32.4	32.4	32.4
Direct Mail	16	15.7	15.7	48.0
Telephone	11	10.8	10.8	58.8
Advertisement	42	41.2	41.2	100.0
Total	102	100.0	100.0	

Figure 12B. Right Approach to Share the Gospel

"Advertisement" came in first-place with a frequency of 42 respondents, which is 41.2% of the total respondents. Following "advertisement," is "door-to-door," which garnered a frequency of 33, and it is 32.4% of total respondents. Coming in third place is "direct mail," which brought in a frequency of 16, which is 15.7% of the respondents. Lastly, "telephone," which has only a frequency of 11 and is 10.8% of the total respondents. Door-to-door evangelism did not come in first place, but it did come in

second.

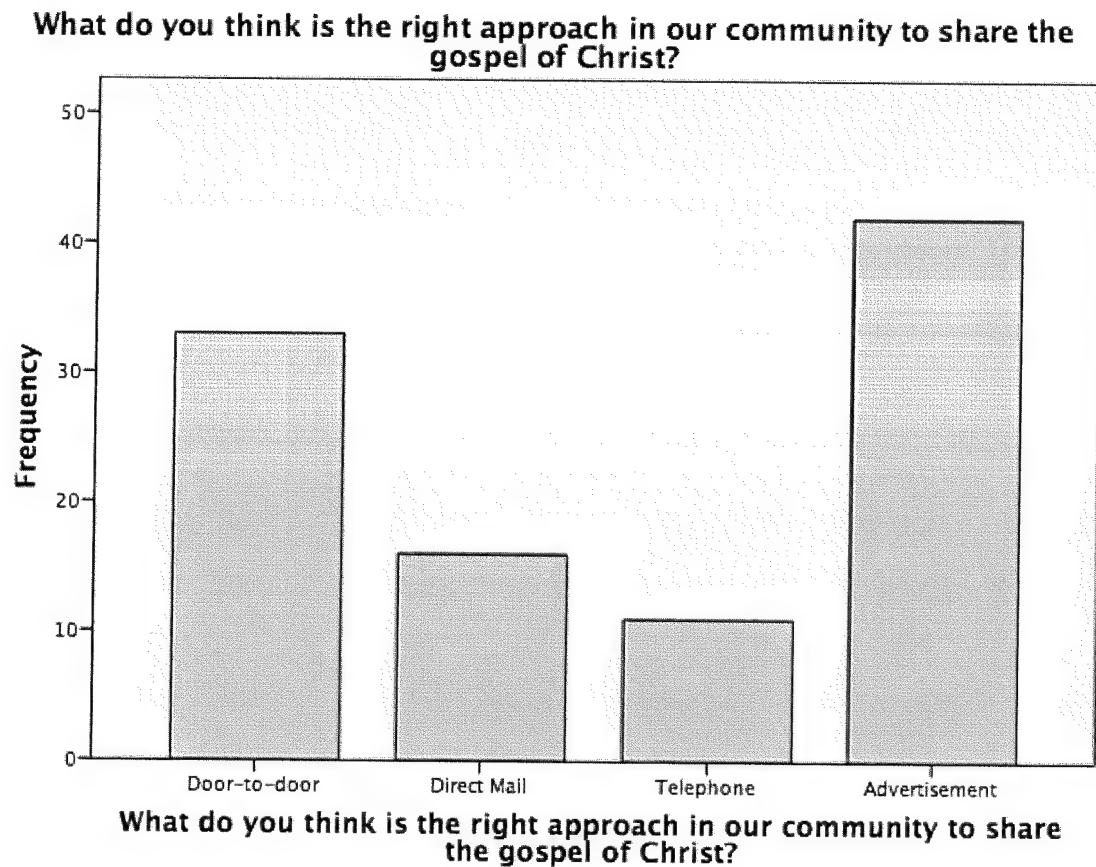


Figure 12C. Right Approach to Share the Gospel

Steve Dunkin suggests there are both positive and negative responses that have resulted from advertisements. The three positive responses are (1) it can galvanize enthusiasm in a church. Advertisements give people what they want. (2) It can galvanize religious premonitions. In many occasions, I have driven by churches or seen various advertising campaigns. In looking at these sightings, it makes me think about the seriousness of salvation. And (3) it can also galvanize the initial step for a proselyte to

try a church for the first time.¹⁵

The negative results show that a study was conducted. That an average adult will see 1,700 advertising messages per day. Out of those 1, 700 advertisement messages, only seventy-five of those advertisements will get noticed. Most of those 1, 700 advertisement messages will be unnoticed.¹⁶ In considering the cost factor (thousands of dollar), one has to seriously consider if advertisement is worthwhile resource.

Would you like to know more about God?

N	Valid	102
	Missing	0
Mode		Yes

Figure 13A. Knowledge about God

In the question: “Would you like to know more about God?” Most of the respondents selected, “yes.”

Would you like to know more about God?

	Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid No	15	14.7	14.7	14.7
Yes	87	85.3	85.3	100.0
Total	102	100.0	100.0	

Figure 13B. Knowledge about God

“Yes” has a frequency of 87 respondents with 85.3%, whereas “no” has only a frequency of 15 with 14.7% of the votes.

¹⁵ Dunkin, *Church Advertising*, 22-23.

¹⁶ Dunkin, *Church Advertising*, 29.

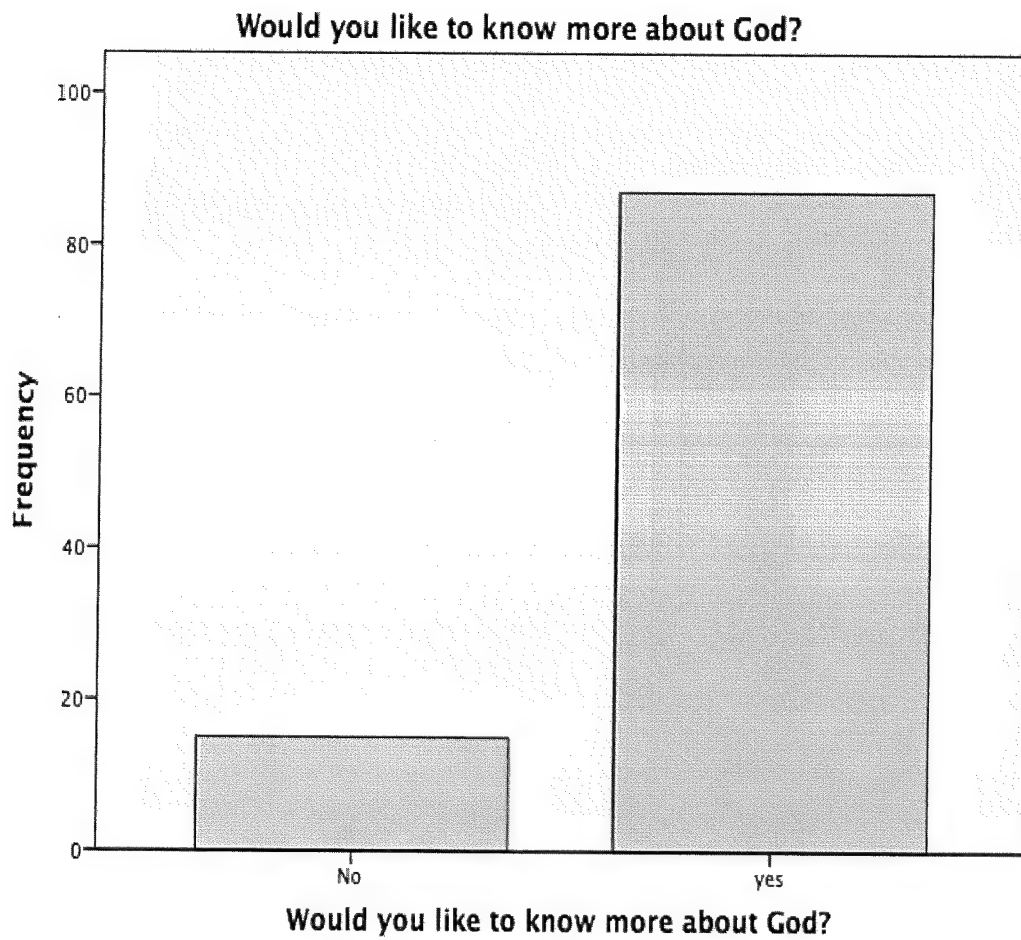


Figure 13C. Knowledge about God

It is obvious that more people preferred to know more about God than those who do not.

How much do you know about the Bible?

N	Valid	102
	Missing	0
Mode		Half/half

Figure 14A. Knowledge about the Bible

The preferred mode is half/half.

How much do you know about the Bible?

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	A little bit	20	19.6	19.6	19.6
	None	1	1.0	1.0	20.6
	A lot	35	34.3	34.3	54.9
	Half/half	46	45.1	45.1	100.0
	Total	102	100.0	100.0	

Figure14B. Knowledge about the Bible

“Half/half” came in first-place with a frequency of 46 respondents, which is 45.1% of the total respondents. Following “half/half,” is “a lot,” which garnered a frequency of 35, and it is 34.3% of total respondents. Coming in third place is “a little bit,” which brought in a frequency of 20, which is 19.6% of the respondents. Finally, in last-place, “none,” which has only a frequency of 1 and is 1% of the total respondents.

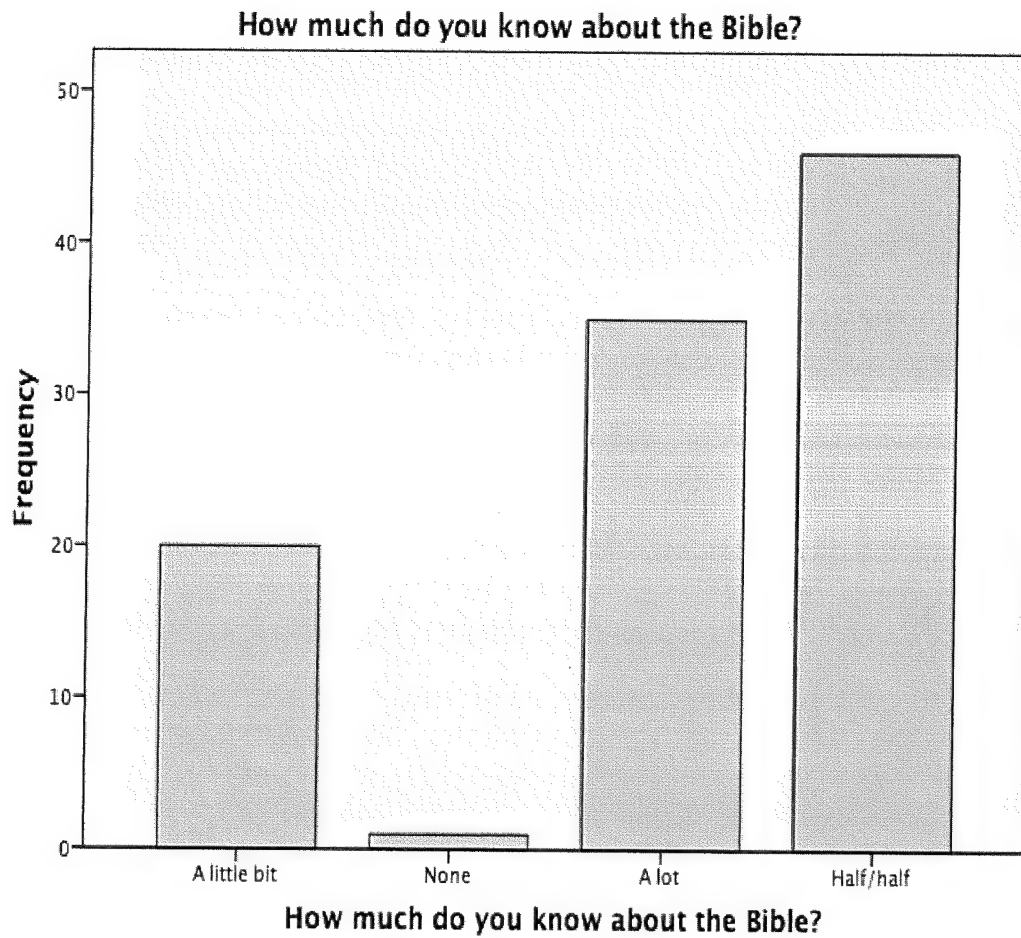


Figure 14C. Knowledge about the Bible

In observation of this chart, "half/half" comes on top as "how much erudition respondents have in the Bible?" "A lot," on the other hand, falls short of 11 votes. According to Barna Research Group, 90% of the churchd peruse their Bible once a week.¹⁷ Thirty-nine percent believe that the Bible is God's revelation to mankind, and it does not contain any factual errors.¹⁸ It is possible that they peruse their Bibles on

¹⁷George Barna, *Financial Problems of the Unchurched* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1996), 69-70.

¹⁸ Barna, *Financial Problems*, 70.

Sundays only. If this is the case, then, biblical erudition was an ecclesiastic initiative rather than congregant initiative. If, the congregants only peruse their Bible once a week, how can they possibly know the Bible “a lot” or “half/half?” This is highly improbable. Just because people say they know, it does not mean that they actually know. It all depends on whom they are comparing themselves, too. Conversely, Barna also points out that 75% of the unchurched owns the Bible,¹⁹ but only 3% of the unchurched read the Bible every day.²⁰

This could hardly be significant, if only 3% peruse their Bibles. Even if, they do read their Bibles, it will only have an indelible affect, if it increases their faith and changes their conducts. If this is not the case, then it will be likely they do not read their bibles at all.

Barna Research Group asserts that only 39% of the unchurched believes that the Bible is the actual Word of God.²¹ But, one out of five believes that the Bible is filled with errors because of human interventions.²² Perhaps, this is the reason why the unchurched do not go to church.

¹⁹ Barna, *Financial Problems*, 69-70.

²⁰ Barna, *Financial Problems*, 70.

²¹ Barna, *Financial Problems*, 70.

²² Barna, *Financial Problems*, 70.

		Does it bother you for someone to knock on your door to talk about Christianity?	What do you think is the right approach in our community to share the gospel of Christ?
Does it bother you for someone to knock on your door to talk about Christianity?	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	1 102	-.267** .007 102
What do you think is the right approach in our community to share the gospel of Christ?	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.267** .007 102	1 102

Table 2. Correlations

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Based on these results, we can determine the inference on the following:

1. Although SPSS points to the fact that the correlation is significant at 0.01 level, it can also determine the significant level with this formula: $R < .05$. Since, $.007 < .05$, there is a positive relationship between the two variables, but there is a 5% probability that this result happened by chance.
2. In SPSS, I can use this correlation module to determine the relationship between two variables. These two variables can influence each other, especially, if they are related. For pragmatic purposes, I will be utilizing the Bivariate of the Pearson Correlation Coefficient, this will help me to determine the strength of

the two correlating variables in question: “What do you think is the right approach in our community to share the gospel of Christ” and “Does it bother you for someone to knock on your door to talk about Christianity?” Although, SPSS already shows the correlation is significant at the 0.01 level, but it does not give the strength of that variable and how it will influence each other. This is where the Pearson’s correlation coefficient r will be efficacious. The coefficient r is determined by three different modes:

Coefficient R Effect

If $r = 1$, then there is a perfect and strong linear relationship. The closer the Pearson’s r number is to 1, for example 0.999, the stronger the relationship and the stronger the effect between the two variables. If this is the case, one can conclude, as one variable is increased, the other variable is also increased.

If $r = -1$, then there is a perfect negative linear relationship between the two variables.

If the Pearson’s variable is a negative number, then one variable has increased and the other variable has decreased.

If $r = 0$, then there is no linear relationship between the two variables. The closer Pearson’s r gets to 0, the weaker the relationship and the weaker the effect between the two variables. For example, if the Pearson’s r were 0.01, it would be safe to presume that our two variables are not strongly correlated.

Note: A correlation coefficient is always between -1 and 1, invariably.

Probability R Coefficient

$R = .70$ or higher, this means that the relationship is positive and very strong.

$.40$ to $.69$, this means that the relationship is positive and strong.

$.30$ to $.39$, this means that the relationship is positive, but mediocre.

$.20$ to $.29$, this means that the relationship is positive, but weak.

$.01$ to $.19$, this means that there is no relationship.

$-.20$ to $-.29$, this means the relationship is negative and weak.

$-.30$ to $-.39$, this means the relationship is negative and mediocre.

$-.40$ to $-.69$, this means the relationship is negative and strong.

$-.70$ or higher, this means the relationship is negative and strong.

		Does it bother you for someone to knock on your door to talk about Christianity?	What do you think is the right approach in our community to share the gospel of Christ?
Does it bother you for someone to knock on your door to talk about Christianity?	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	A 1 D 102	B .267** C .007 D 102
What do you think is the right approach in our community to share the gospel of Christ?	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	B -.267** C .007 D 102	A 1 D 102

Table 3. Pearson Correlation

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

A = (1), if the variable, "Does it bother you for someone to knock on your

door to talk about Christianity” and it correlated with itself, then it is perfectly

$B = (.267^{**})$, this is the coefficient r .

$C = (.007)$, this is the P-Value.

$D = (N \text{ or } 102)$, this is the total population that was surveyed.

Let us compute the coefficient r by using the schematic above. We can discover the coefficient r by looking at the letter “B,” which is $-.267$. ^{**} In looking at the Probability Coefficient R Table, we can extract the exact strength of the relationship on the table by determining where $-.267$ is on the Probability Coefficient R Table. In this case, it shows that the relationship is negative, and it is weak. Next, we have to determine the effects of the two variables by looking at the Coefficient R Effect Table and extract the correct strength. Based upon the information on the table, we can deduce that the relationship between the two variables is negatively weak. The effects of the two variables: One variable will increase, while the other variable will decrease. Therefore, based upon the designed of the two questions: “Does it bother you for someone to knock on your door to talk about Christianity” and “What do you think is the right approach in our community to share the gospel of Christ,” which question will increase and which one will decrease. Since the question, “Does it bother you for someone to knock on your door to talk about Christianity” is a “yes” and “no” answer, without any independent variable, we can conclude that this question will increase, while the other question— “What do you think is the right approach in our community to share the gospel of Christ,” will decrease. This is understandable, since it has four other independent variables (advertisement, direct mail, door-to-door, and telephone), especially when

factoring in the notion that when the other variables, such as advertisement, direct mail, and telephone is the preferred selections of the respondents. If this is the case, then these variables will lose it potency.

3. Even if, we have sufficient evidences to presume that there is a relationship between the two variables, we have a more accurate procedure of determining the legitimacy between the relationship of the two variables by using the Null Hypothesis. The Null Hypothesis is a statistical test to determine if there is no significant relationship between the two variables. If there is no relationship between the two variables, then we have to accept the Null Hypothesis. But then,

if there is a relationship between the two variables, then we have to reject the Null Hypothesis. This hypothetical test will determine if we should accept or reject the Null Hypothesis:

$H_0: p = 0$, there is no linear relationship between door-to-door evangelism and the right approach for sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ.

$H_1: p \neq 0$, there is a linear relationship between door-to-door evangelism and the right approach for sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Since the P-value is .007 or $.007 \neq 0$, we can reject the Null Hypothesis and conclude there is a relationship between the two variables.

Bottom line:

The causality of the bivariate correlation between the two variables cannot be determined because one cannot determine which variable is causing the effect. An

attentive look at the two variables, will give us an explanation of why this is the case. In glancing at the question, "Does it bother you for someone to knock on your door to talk about Christianity?" You should note that there are only two options: yes or no. And in the question, "What do you think is the right approach in our community to share the gospel of Christ?" There are four different options: direct mail, door-to-door, advertisement, and telephone. Since, there are four different options, there is no way of determining which variable will effect the question, "Does it bother you for someone to knock on your door to talk about Christianity?" However, one does know that there is a moderate but weak relationship between the two variables. This is understandably so, when considering the question, "What do you think is the right approach in our community to share the gospel of Christ," and since this question has four optional answers. The strength will only increase when the respondents choose "door-to-door" as the preferred option, but it will decrease when the other options are chosen.

In conclusion, figure 8B shows that door-to-door evangelism comes in second place (32.4%) behind Advertisement (41.2%). This is better than expected. This positive result about door-to-door evangelism has led me to think, why do the authors in my assigned readings viewed door-to-door evangelism as ineffective? What evidences do they have in their research? Have they tried door-to-door evangelism themselves? One would think that they would have at least documented their negative result in their writings. But, nowhere in their writings have they said that they have tried door-to-door evangelism. So, what evidences do they have to denigrate door-to-door evangelism? According to my survey, there are 26.5% of the people that do not go to church. Even if,

they do not approve, the Bible still commands to go, despite anticipated rejection.²³

In my second survey collection, I knocked on forty-one doors, and I must admit: It was a very interesting experience. Thirteen people were not home; two people did not have the time to participate in the survey collection. One person would not open the door. There were twenty people who filled out the survey. One person refused, and one person told me that she was not interested. Three people told me to come back. Overall, this was a great training exercise for me.

The residents of Stonewall Manor in Richmond, Virginia, were surveyed. This survey has seven different questions that correspond to communal outreach. I have chosen the Likert Scale as a way to measure the residents' preferred responses. This was conducted so I can investigate and solicit the opinions of the residents' responses. The letter "N" represents the total number of residents whom were surveyed. In this case, there were twenty residents surveyed. In the above example, SPSS has recorded twenty valid respondents and zero respondents were missing.

Churches should reach out to people in their community?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	11	55.0	55.0	55.0
	Strongly Agree	5	25.0	25.0	80.0
	Undecided	3	15.0	15.0	95.0
	Disagree	1	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	20	100.0	100.0	

Figure 15A. Outreach

²³ Matthew 10:14-15.

In Figure 15A, most residents agree that churches should reach out to the people in their community. Eleven people selected, “agree” and five of the twenty people surveyed think that churches should have an outreach program in their churches. Collectively, eighty percent of those survey support this evangelistic ideology. These are significant findings. It will not take a lot of convincing to convince these people to participate in outreach programs. However, the remainder of the twenty percent will need additional persuasive tactics, namely, the Bible. The Bible has many persuasive evangelistic principles to persuade people to commit themselves to evangelism

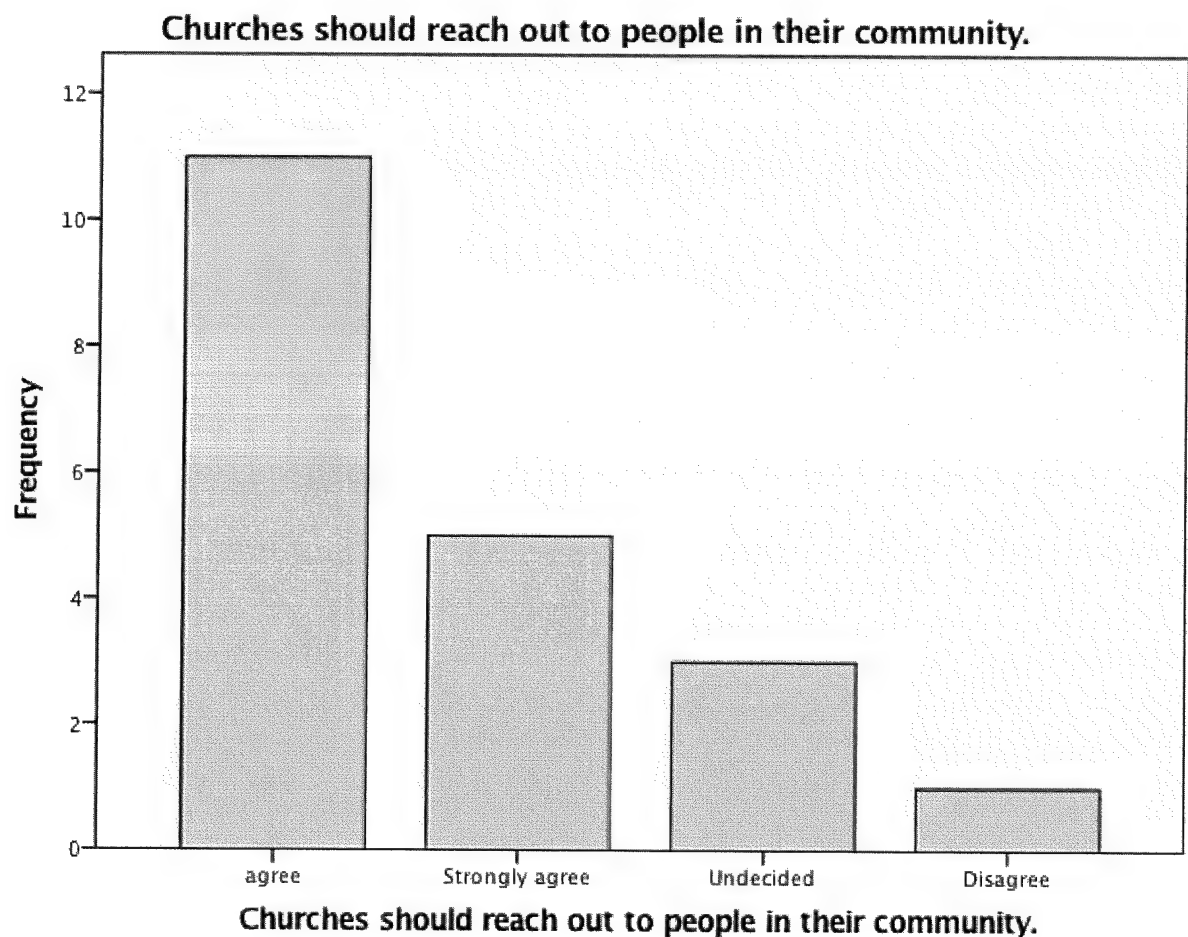


Figure 15B. Outreach

In figure 15B, it clearly shows that most people that have taken the survey agree that churches should reach out to people in their community. And twenty-five percent of those people strongly agree that churches should reach out to their community. Those who selected, “undecided,” may have little or no knowledge about biblical principles in evangelism. This may also be the case for those who selected, “Disagree.” By exposing people to biblical principles and concepts in evangelism, it does not necessary guarantee commitment to evangelism, but it does increase the likelihood of people making commitment to evangelism.

Churches should make significant improvements in its outreach programs?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	12	60.0	60.0	60.0
	Strongly Disagree	6	30.0	30.0	90.0
	Undecided	2	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	20	100.0	100.0	

Figure 16A. Outreach Improvements

No one has selected, “Strongly agree” in Figure 16A, but there is an overwhelming majority that sixty-percent selected, “Agree,” as their preferred way for, “churches should make significant improvements in their outreach programs.” This means that twelve people selected this choice. However, six people selected, “Strongly Disagree,” as their preferred choice, and two of the twenty, selected, “Undecided,” as their preferred choice. In this diagram, no one selected, “Disagree

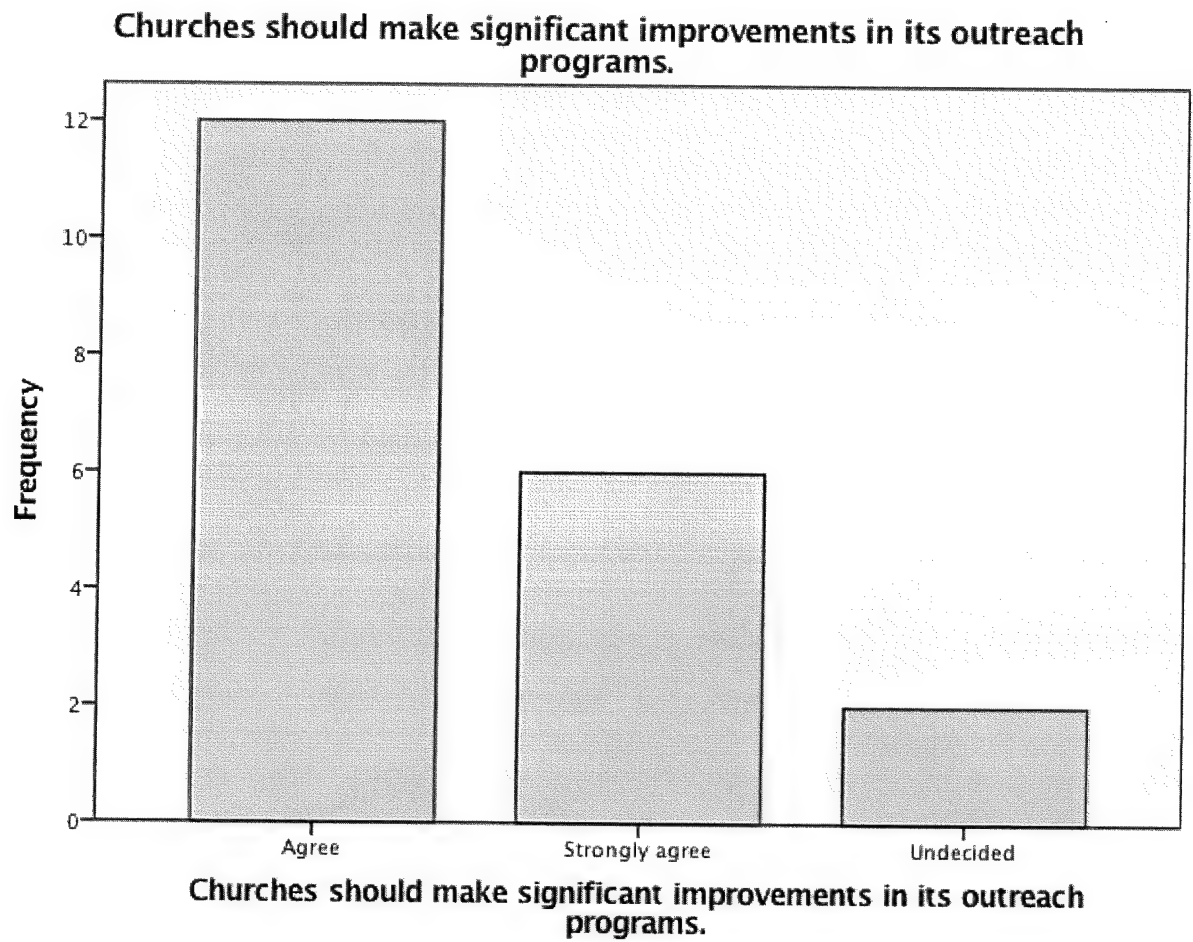


Figure 16B. Outreach Improvements

This above diagram shows how “Agree” is the preferred choice in this category, whereas “Strongly agree” comes in about the halfway mark to “Agree.” And “Undecided” received only 10 percent.

Door-to-door evangelism is the best way to evangelize.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Agree	6	30.0	30.0	30.0
Strongly agree	3	15.0	15.0	45.0
Undecided	6	30.0	30.0	75.0
Strongly disagree	5	25.0	25.0	100.0
Total	20	100.0	100.0	

Figure 17A. Door-to-Door Evangelism

Six people selected, "Door-to-door evangelism is the best way to evangelize," and three people selected, "Strongly Agree" as the best way to evangelize. Collectively, this is a total of nine people out of the twenty people who participated in the survey collection who agree that door-to-door evangelism is the best way to evangelize the populace. Six of that twenty people was undecided, but there were five people whom "Strongly Disagree." Overall, this diagram shows that door-to-door evangelism is the residents' preferred way to evangelize, but it also shows that six people were "Undecided."

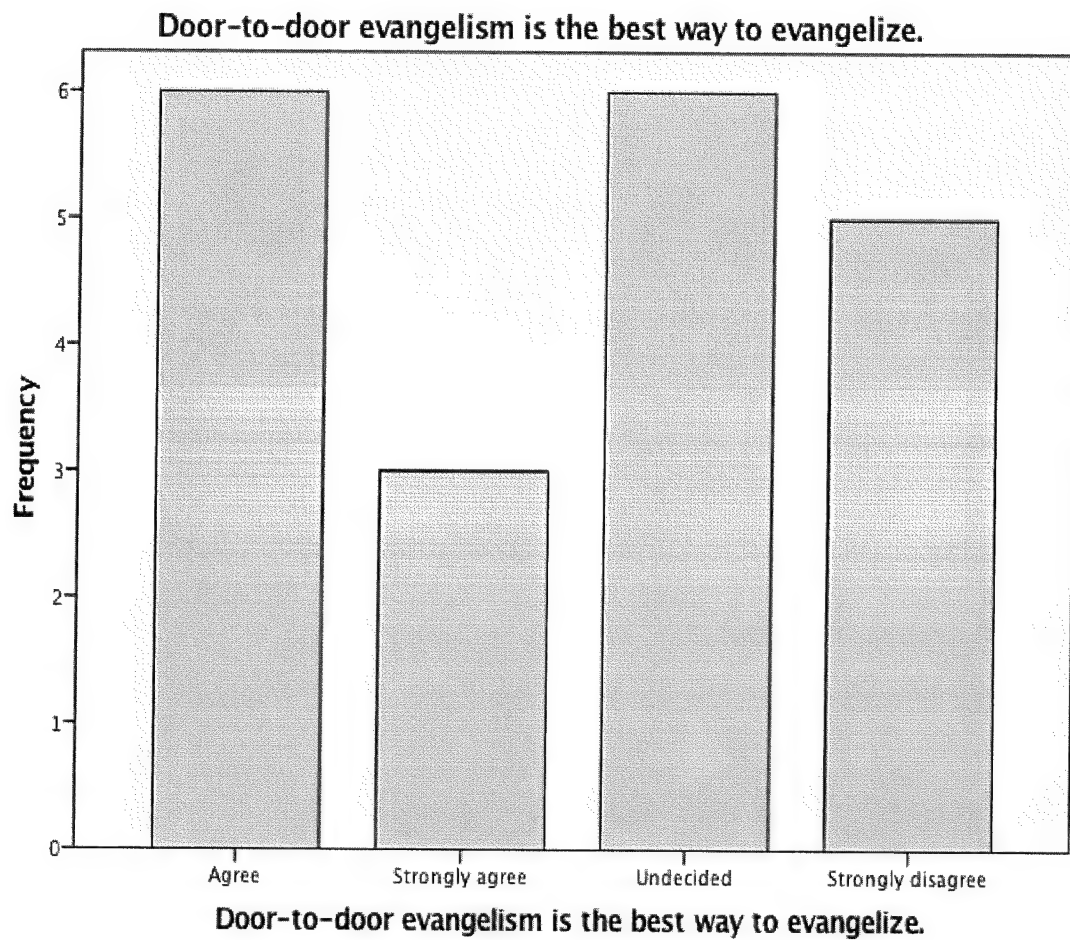


Figure 17B. Door-to-Door Evangelism

This is a tight race between, “Agree” and “Undecided.” But, there is a possibility that twenty-five percent of those who “Strongly disagree” that “door-to-door evangelism is the best way to evangelize” may experience hostile reactions.

Direct mail is the best way to evangelize.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Agree	2	10.0	10.0	10.0
Strongly agree	2	10.0	10.0	20.0
Undecided	8	40.0	40.0	60.0
Strongly disagree	8	40.0	40.0	100.0
Total	20	100.0	100.0	

Figure 18A. Direct Mail

Only two people selected, "Agree," for direct mail, as the best way to evangelize, and two people selected "Strongly agree," for the best way to evangelize. Eight people selected, "Undecided," for direct mail to be the best way to evangelize. Eight people selected, "Undecided," and eight people selected, "Strongly disagree," for direct mail as the best way to evangelize.

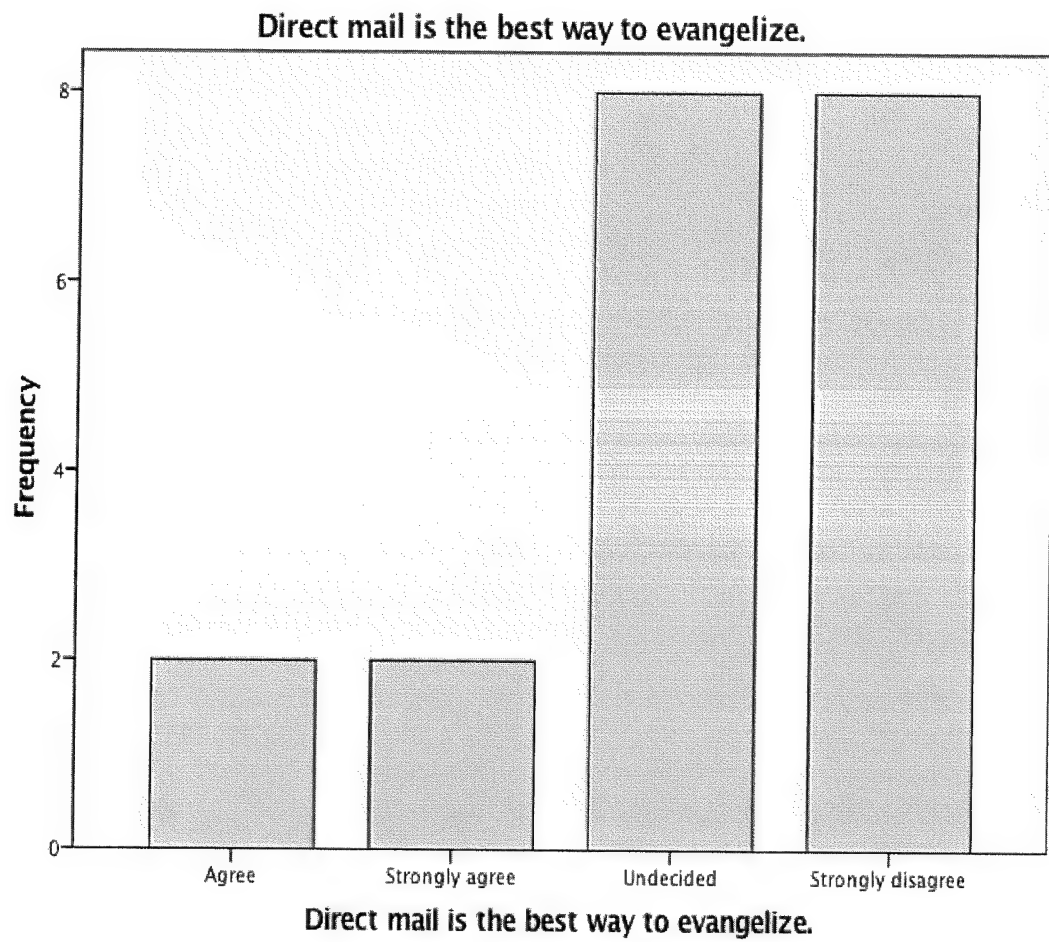


Figure 18B. Direct Mail

The twin towers of “Undecided” and “Strongly disagree” tower over “Agree” and “Strongly agree.”

Telephone calling is the best way to evangelize.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Agree	2	10.0	10.0	10.0
Strongly agree	1	5.0	5.0	15.0
Undecided	6	30.0	30.0	45.0
Disagree	1	5.0	5.0	50.0
Strongly disagree	10	50.0	50.0	100.0
Total	20	100.0	100.0	

Figure 19A. Telephone

“Strongly Disagree” comes on top with ten people whom “Strongly disagree,” as the highest frequency for disagreeing that telephone solicitation is the preferred way to evangelize. “Undecided” comes in next, with six people, and “Agree” follows “Undecided,” with two people, both of them are disagreeing that telephone solicitation is the best way to evangelize. The “Cumulative percent” segment shows that twenty-five percent of the total participants of this survey agree that telephone is the best way to evangelize, but this is only a frequency of three people, though. In contrast, ten people “Strongly disagree” with one person who “Disagree” that telephone solicitation is not the best way to evangelize. This is a cumulative frequency of eleven people in total.

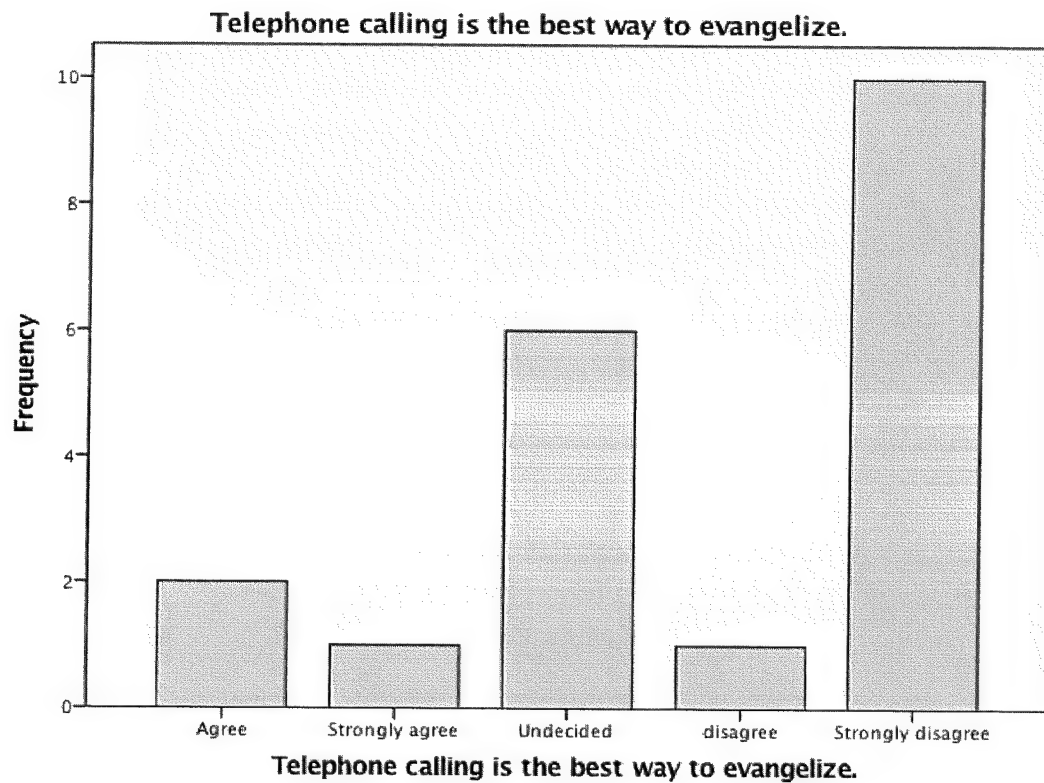


Figure 19B. Telephone

Figure 19B says it all; people do not like evangelists to solicit by telephone. This means that fifty percent of the participants of this survey, not only disagree, but also they have chosen, "Strongly disagree." Thirty percent of the people were undecided. Only ten percent of the people selected, "Agree," combining with 1 percent of the people have chosen, "Strongly agree." One percent of the people have chosen, "disagree." Obviously, in looking at this diagram, telephone evangelism is not the preferred choice.

Churches need to send their faithful members in the communities to bring new members in their churches.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Agree	12	60.0	60.0	60.0
Strongly agree	3	15.0	15.0	75.0
Undecided	3	15.0	15.0	90.0
Disagree	1	5.0	5.0	95.0
Strongly Disagree	1	5.0	5.0	100.0
Total	20	100.0	100.0	

Figure 20A. Members to Evangelize

Twelve residents have chosen, "Agree," and three people have chosen, "Strongly agree." This is a total of fifteen people or seventy-five percent of residents who agree that, "Churches need to send their faithful members in the communities to bring new members in their churches." There were only three people who were undecided. One who disagree and one who strongly disagree.

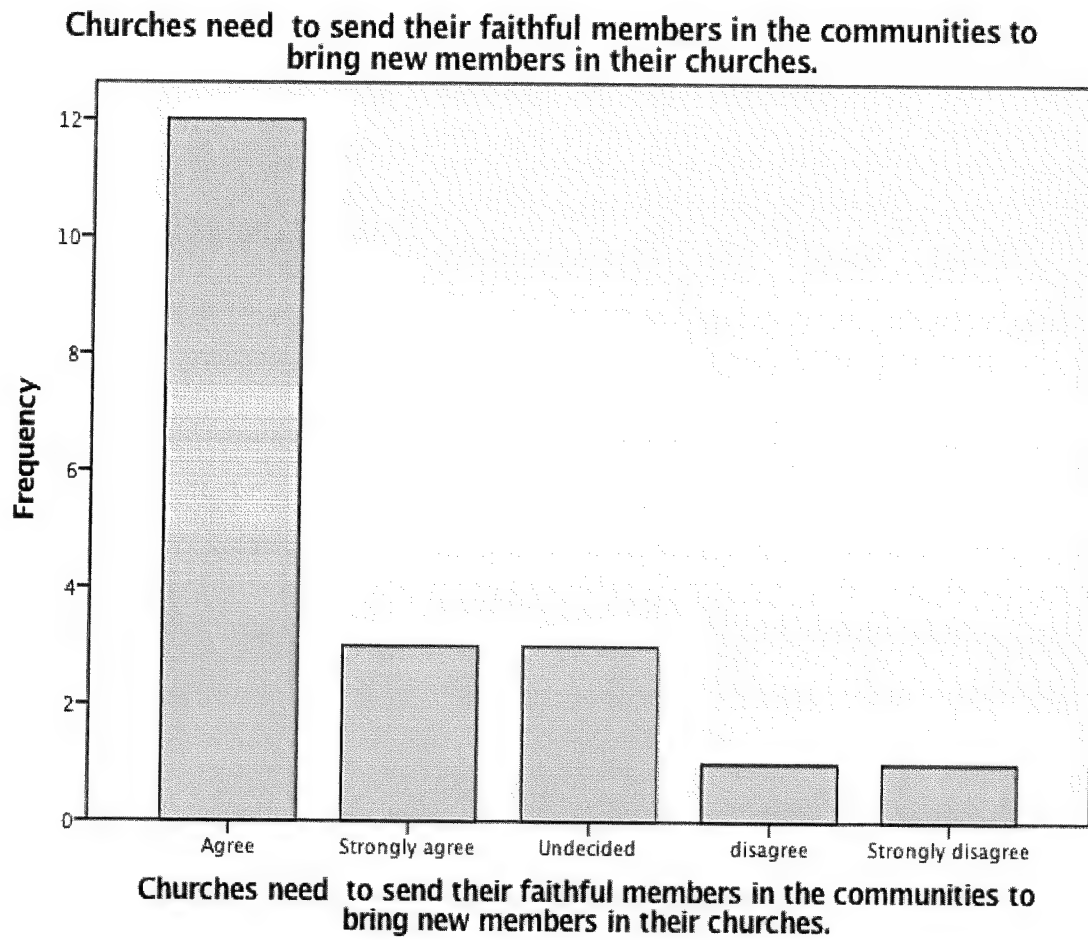


Figure 20B. Members to Evangelize

Most of the residents selected, “Agree,” because they believe that churches need to send their members to the lost communities. “Agree” combined with “Strongly agree” have a collective total of 75 percent of the total residents. Fifteen percent was undecided and a collective total of ten percent was “disagree” and “Strongly disagree.”

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	10	50.0	50.0	50.0
	No	10	50.0	50.0	100.0
	Total	20	100.0	100.0	

Figure 21A. Knocking on Your Door

In Figure 21A, both “Yes” and “No” have ten residents each, both “Yes” and “No” have fifty percent. Just because fifty percent of the people do not mind evangelists knocking on their doors, does not mean they will not be receptive to evangelization. The same people that selected, “Yes, “and said that they do mind evangelists knocking on their doors are the same people that I knocked on their doors, and they at least filled out the survey.

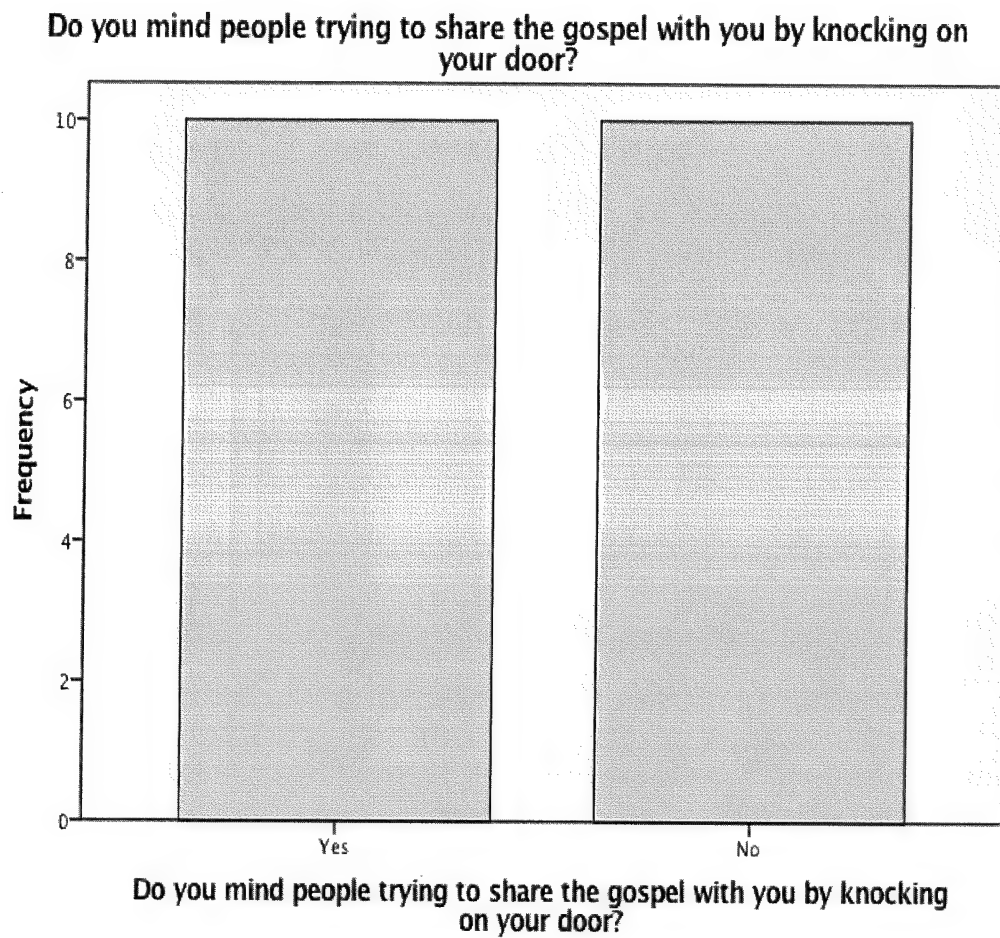


Figure 21B. Door-to-Door Bother You

What do you think is the right approach in our community to share the gospel of Christ?

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Door-to-door	33	32.4	32.4	32.4
	Direct Mail	16	15.7	15.7	48.0
	Telephone	11	10.8	10.8	58.8
	Advertisement	42	41.2	41.2	100.0
Total		102	100.0	100.0	

Figure 22. Sharing the Gospel

Figure 22 represents sample 1, this is the result from the question, "What do you think is the right approach in our community to share the gospel of Christ?" It clearly

shows "Advertisement" as the best way to evangelize the populace.

In the figure below of sample 20B, I presented four different questions to the resident, so they can determine what is the best way to evangelize. Door-to-door evangelism falls in second place with a total of nine votes.

Door-to-door evangelism is the best way to evangelize?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Agree	6	30.0	30.0	30.0
Strongly agree	3	15.0	15.0	45.0
Undecided	6	30.0	30.0	75.0
Strongly disagree	5	25.0	25.0	100.0
Total	20	100.0	100.0	

Figure 23. Door-to Door

Direct mail is the best way to evangelize?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Agree	2	10.0	10.0	10.0
Strongly agree	2	10.0	10.0	20.0
Undecided	8	40.0	40.0	60.0
Strongly disagree	8	40.0	40.0	100.0
Total	20	100.0	100.0	

Figure 24. Direct Mail

Direct mail falls in third place with a total of four votes.

Telephone calling is the best way to evangelize?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Agree	2	10.0	10.0	10.0
Strongly agree	1	5.0	5.0	15.0
Undecided	6	30.0	30.0	45.0
Disagree	1	5.0	5.0	50.0
Strongly disagree	10	50.0	50.0	100.0
Total	20	100.0	100.0	

Figure 25. Telephone

Telephone falls in last place with three total votes.

Advertisement is the best way to evangelize?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Agree	6	30.0	30.0	30.0
Strongly agree	4	20.0	20.0	50.0
Undecided	3	15.0	15.0	65.0
Disagree	4	20.0	20.0	85.0
Strongly disagree	3	15.0	15.0	100.0
Total	20	100.0	100.0	

Figure 26. Advertisement

With a total of 10 votes, according to the results of both communal samples, advertisement is optimal way to evangel

Results from Survey 1

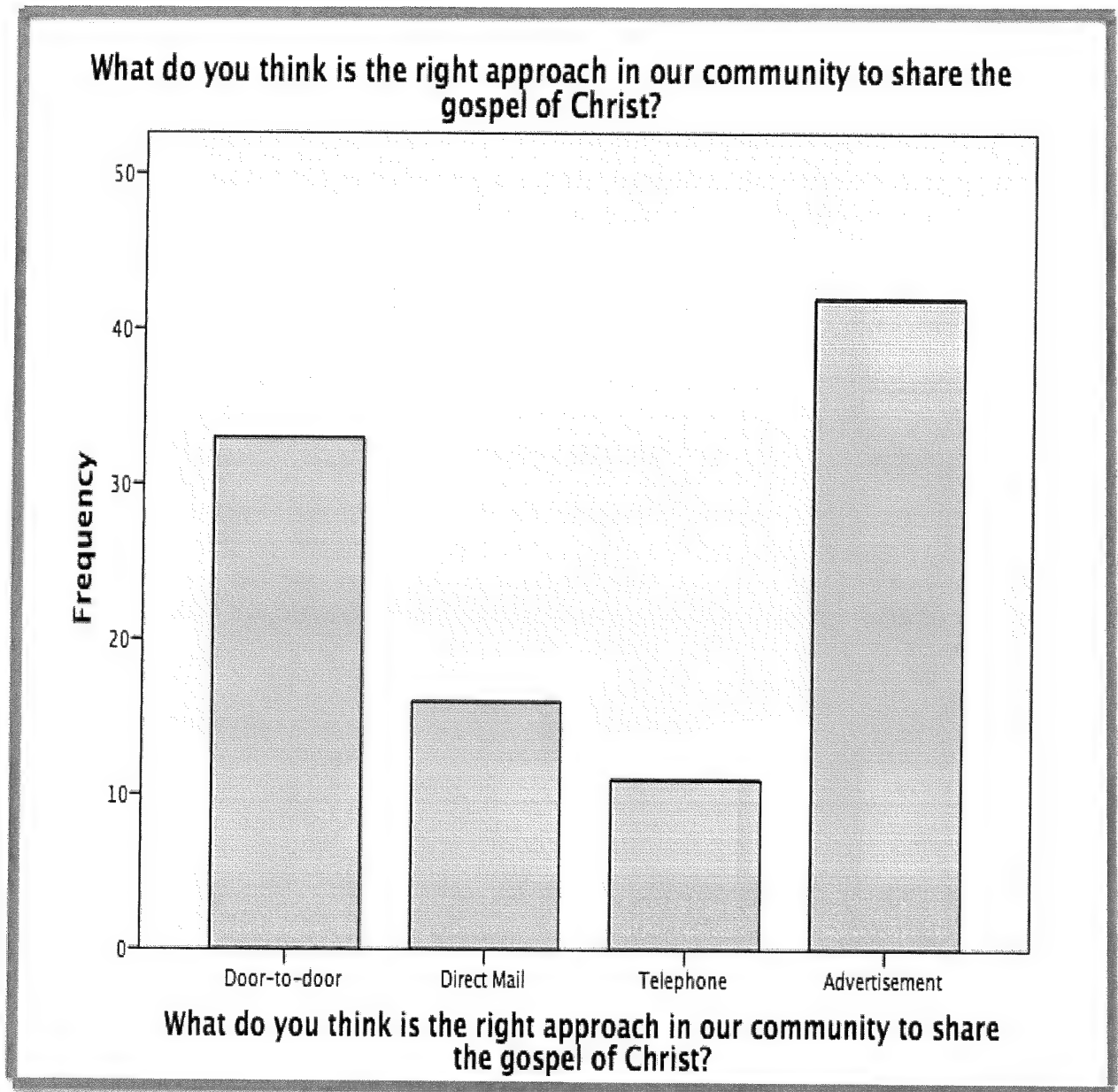


Figure 27. Right Approach Sharing the Gospel

Results from Survey II

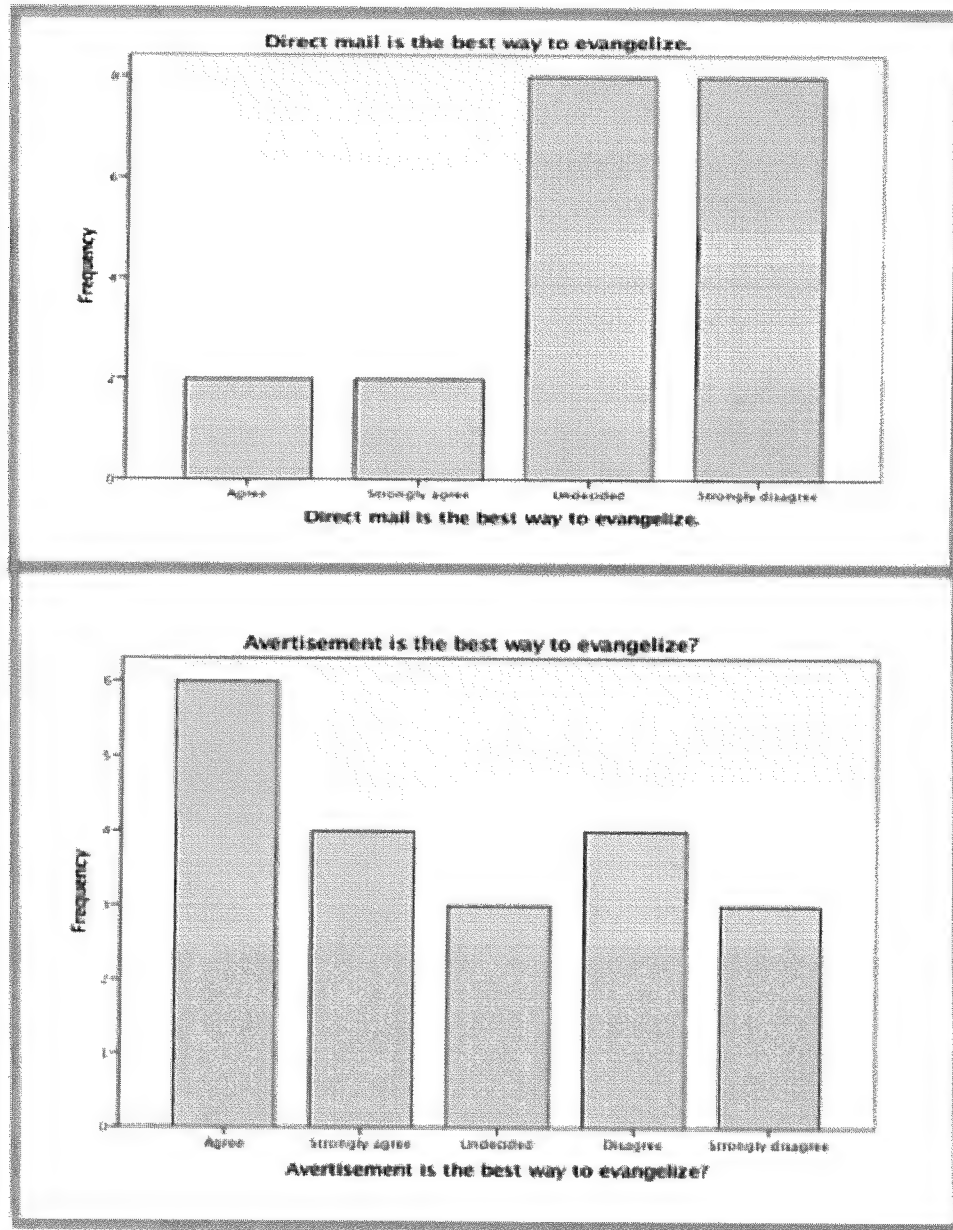


Figure 28. Direct Mail and Advertisement

Results From Survey II

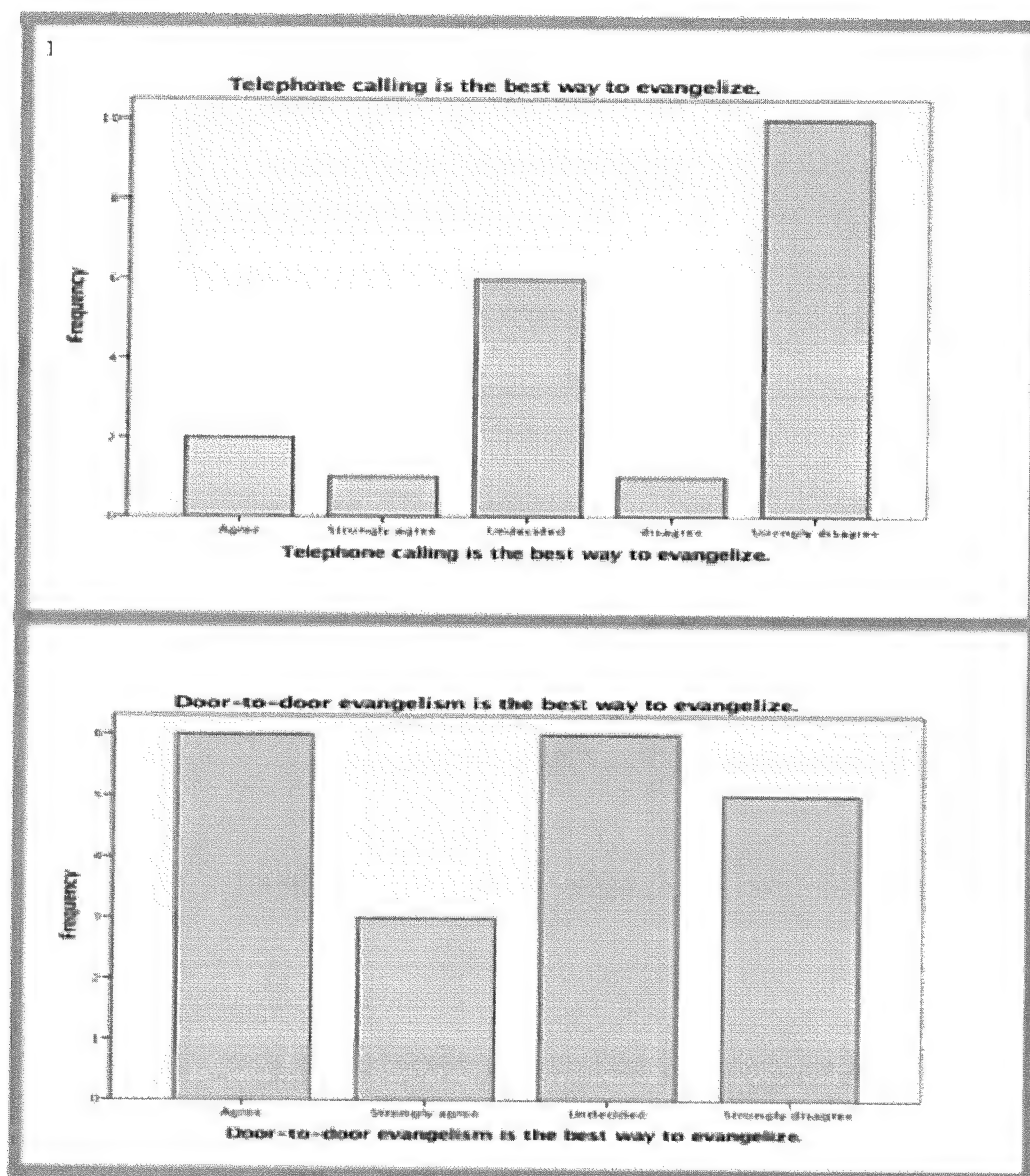


Figure 29. Telephone Calling

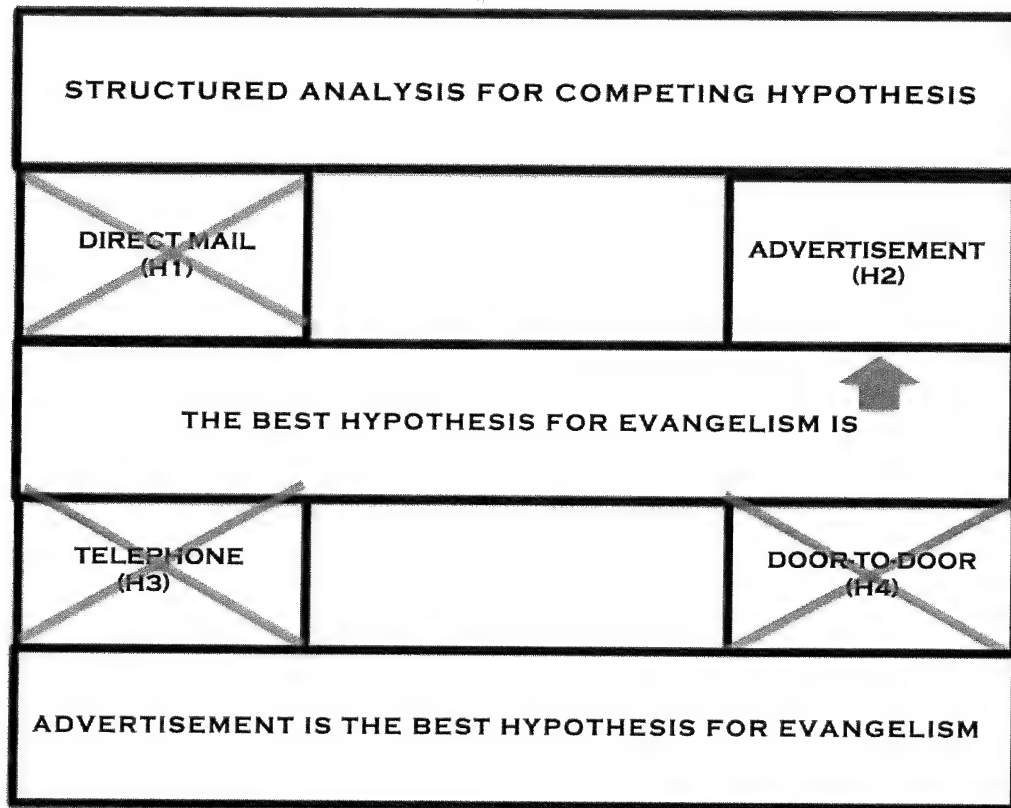


Figure 30. Analysis for Competing Hypothesis

In conclusion, advertisement is optimal way to evangelize. According to the results of the surveys, advertisement is selected as the optimal way to evangelize, not just one conclusive survey results, but both conclusive results points to advertisement as the optimal way to evangelize. However, advertisement can be quite expensive, especially television advertisement. This might be an ideal way to evangelize when a ministry is mature and have a strong financial support, but radio advertisement is the way I will explore in my young ministry. This form of advertisement is cheaper and can be just as effective as television advertisement. Even though the results pointed to advertisement as the optimal way to evangelize, door-to-door evangelism has proven to be a worthy contender in evangelism. Plus, it is inexpensive and anybody can do it. In both

survey collections, door-to-door evangelism came in second place. These findings have greatly convinced me, and I will definitely use door-to-door evangelism heavily in my ministerial context. However, since the survey results are in my ministerial context in Henrico, VA, that does not mean that the same results will occur in every community.

CHAPTER FIVE

OUTCOMES

This is the conclusions and recommendation section. In this chapter, I will review and summarize: (1) The objective of thesis; (2) the focus of thesis; (3) the location and date of investigation; (4) the methodology of research; (5) the gathering of research; (6) the statistical instrument; (7) and lastly, the conclusion. In the conclusions segment of my thesis, I will review chapter 1: the problem and the setting; chapter 2: theological framework; chapter 3: literature review; Chapter 4: project design.

There is a formative progression in my thesis that can be used as way to precipitate change or improvement, not only in my thesis, but also to any problematic area in my ministry. For instance, if there is a problem in a ministerial area: what do scriptures say about that problem, and how is that problem measure, and what is the course of action that needs to be taken? This is how chapter 2: theological framework was developed, but how are other people tackling this problem? Here is where chapter 3: the literature review is most helpful. Most likely, there are other authors who had similar problems, too. What did they say? What did they do? How did they deal with their problems or what solutions did they execute in their ministerial contexts? Every problem is different in different ministerial contexts, and every solution may be different in different ministerial contexts. For instance, in my literary review, I noticed there were authors who use modern ways to evangelize (telephone, advertisement, and

direct mail); these were unknown evangelistic methods in the Early Church.

This tells me that different contexts may need different solutions. In other words, just because door-to-door evangelism works well in one area does not mean it will work well in a different area. Once an evangelistic method is determined: then door-to-door, advertisement, direct mail, or telephone evangelism, then what is the testability of the method? In this particular study, I chose the Survey Research and Statistical Analysis to test my hypothesis. My rationale is, since people need to be evangelized, then they should know how they want to be evangelized.

The objective of this study is to preach the gospel to every creature and to allow professing Christian to undergo self-examination.¹ The rationale behind these two scriptures is based upon Romans 10:14: “How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher?” The main objective of this study is not preaching the gospel. The main objective of this study is to determine the optimal way to reach every creature with the gospel of Christ? Door-to-door evangelism is my preferred methodology, and my biblical foundations are based upon Luke 10: 5, Act 20:20, and Acts 5:42.

Door-to-door evangelism is not the only form of evangelism. There are different biblical methodologies to evangelize. For the most part, evangelism can be considered into two categories: one is direct approach and the other is indirect

¹ Mark 16:15; 2 Corinthians 3:15.

approach. In this study, direct approach is represented by door-to-door evangelism, and indirect approach is represented by advertisements and direct mail. There are many ways to evangelize— Door-to-door evangelism is just one way to evangelize. Since the Bible does not preclude other forms of evangelism, then other forms of evangelism should be considered as possible candidates for evangelistic primacy. The purpose of this study is to evaluate door-to-door evangelism, telephone solicitation, advertisement, and direct mail to determine, which is the optimal methodology to evangelize every creature.

The primary focus of this study is door-to-door evangelism. Even though, other forms of evangelism such as telephone solicitation, and direct mail are worthy contenders. It is my belief that door-to-door evangelism is the optimal way to evangelize. Mainly because it set up direct confrontations with residents, and it can give immediate responses from those who have been challenged with the gospel of Christ. Despite the possible resistance of door-to-door evangelism, it is still a good way to reach every creature.²

Evangelists' responsibility is to present the evidences of the gospel. It is not the evangelists' responsibility to persuade or convince. But, if somehow residents become persuaded and ask questions in the presentation of the gospel, then evangelists should "be ready" to give a defense.³ Door-to-door evangelism is an excellent way to meet challenges and answer difficult questions posed by churchless

² Mark 16:15.

³ 1 Peter 3:15.

people. By using door-to-door evangelism as a way for outreach, people will be able to evaluate their spiritual conditions. In many ways, door-to-door evangelism may be the bridge for bringing two different worldviews together. Telephone solicitation is also a good way to bring two worldviews together, too. But, it lacks eye-to-eye contact and verbal clues to precipitate conversion. Verbal clues can be quite helpful for predicting, interpreting, and choosing the right communicative responses in response to residents' responses. This can also open the door for friendship evangelism or counsel evangelism. Friendship or counsel evangelism gives evangelists the opportunity to act as a friend or counselor.

Even though, Henrico, Virginia is my starting point, it will not be my ending point. Not only do I want to reach the lost in a local way, but I also want to reach the lost everywhere. It is my goal to evangelize every house and knock on every door within thirty-five miles radius from my home. After this, then, I will be evangelizing surrounding counties, cities, and the state of Virginia. After that, then, I hope to evangelize the entire United States, and ultimately the whole world. Of course, I will not engage this evangelistic enterprise by myself. It is my hope to recruit and train other ardent evangelists like myself to participate into world evangelism.

For my research method, I chose the Survey Research and Statistical Analysis. This evaluative methodology will help me to determine, if door-to-door evangelism is optimal. Telephone, direct mail, and advertisement are my competing hypotheses. Since all hypotheses should be verifiably tested, I wanted to invoke the opinions of others to ensure confidence in my presupposition. After the results and evaluations of

the surveys, it is my hope to choose and mobilize the most effective way to evangelize.

I have taken two samples or survey collections. Both of the survey Collections were in Henrico, Virginia. The first collection was surveyed at three different Food Lion locations in August 2014. I chose 102 people randomly, as they were going in or coming out of stores. These areas were safe areas, and I wanted people to feel comfortable in completing out these surveys. The area was in Henrico, Virginia. The first survey collection was surveyed at three different Food Lion locations in August 2014. I chose 102 people randomly, as they were going in or coming out of stores. These areas were safe areas, and I wanted people to feel comfortable in completing the surveys.

The second survey was conducted in my resident of Henrico, Virginia in the month of October 2015. I knocked on thirty-seven residential doors, but I only received twenty residents to participate in filling out the surveys.

I used Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to evaluate data from my Likert Scale questionnaires. I was able to produce various diagrams and graphs that helped me to articulate the results clearly. I calculated descriptive analysis, frequencies, and Null Hypothesis in chapter 4 of my project design.

Chapter 1: The Problem and the Setting

I first noticed this problem in my local church: Mt. Olive Baptist Church in Manakin Sabot, VA. Then, I wanted to research and determine if there were similar

evangelistic problems in my surrounding communities. To my surprise, it was. In the Richmond/Petersburg area, there are 77,000 males and 116,000 females who are the churchless.⁴ This is the problem locally, but also there is a problem nationally. The Barna Group reports that in 2002, there were approximately 180 to 190 million people living in the United States, and out of that 180 to 190 million people, there are ninety to hundred millions people who are unchurched.⁵ But, that was then, what about now? The Barna Group presently states the data has significantly changed. In the past twenty years, skepticism in the Christian faith has exacerbated. This is due to the increase in knowledge and self-adulation of the younger generation. For example, twenty years ago, 18 percent of total population was skeptics of thirty years old and younger. Now that population has almost duplicated to a whopping 34 percent.⁶ Knowledge has also heightened skepticism amongst the younger generation. Twenty years ago, one-third of the skeptics were college graduates, now the trend has jump up to half of college graduates are skeptics. How are we to reach them?

Jesus says, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature (Mark 16:15),⁷ I believe this is the objective that every Christian should live by, and if, every Christian is not living by this objective. Then, this is a problem, not only for the individual, but also for the church as a whole. If every Christian was evangelizing every

⁴ Barna Group, “Richmond/Petersburg, VA: City Report” (2015): 21.

⁵ George Barna, *Grow Your Church from the Outside In: Understanding the Unchurched and How to Reach Them*. (Regal Books: Ventura, CA, 2002), 22-23.

⁶ Barna, *Grow Your Church*, 22-23.

⁷ Mark 16:15.

non-Christian, then probably there will be less churchless people in the United States.⁸ This staggering number can be greatly reduced, if evangelists can reach every creature. The most important questions that need to be asked: how can Christians reach every creature? Is door-to-door evangelism an effective way of reaching churchless people? Not only do evangelists need to reach them, but also evangelists need to build them up. Can door-to-door evangelism be an effective way to build them up and to reach them? After all, Christians need to know if they are truly saved.⁹ With the onslaught of prosperity preachers, biblically illiterate preachers, and false prophets, people may not be spiritually fed. This could be a problem of ignorance for preachers, as well as, biblically illiterate Christians. People may think they are standing on the rock, but finding out on Judgment Day, they are standing on sinking sand. For this reason, evangelist should evangelize all, to determine if, professing Christians are Christians at all. Evangelists can determine the legitimacy of Christian commitments by surveying and asking questions about their personal discipleship commitment.

Chapter 2: Theological Framework

Most of the commentaries that I have read that deal with “house-to-house evangelism” assert that “house-to-house” was a idiom for setting up house churches.¹⁰ I

⁸ Barna Group, *Churchless*, 555-558.

⁹ 1 John 5:13.

¹⁰ Stanley D. Toussaint, “Acts,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 413. John B. Polhill, *Acts*, NAC (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 424. C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and*

have found this is not so. For instance, in observing Matt. 10: 5-7, it suggests that door-to-door evangelism was the evangelistic methodology because of its unpredictability.

Why would Jesus give two possible reactions: one to leave and the other to stay, if the 70 were setting up house churches? One would think, if this was a known house church, then the encounter would have been an expectation of hospitality, instead of hostility.

Another point that convinces me that door-to-door evangelism was the way the Early Church evangelize, is that, Jesus says, "Proclaim the gospel everywhere." Everywhere means everywhere. This would include door-to-door evangelism, especially when the context is about "house evangelism" in Luke 10:5-7.

Yet, another point is in 1 Cor. 10:32, when the Apostle Paul says, "Give no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the church of God" (1 Cor. 10:32). It is obvious that Paul is making a distinction between the unconverted Jews and Greeks from the converted church of God. The Jews and Greeks are the unconverted, and the church of God is the converted. Then by comparing Acts 20:20—"How I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly and from house to house, solemnly testifying to both Jews and Greeks of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ." It is also obvious that Paul was trying to evangelize both the unconverted Jews and Greeks by way of public: synagogues, and by way of private: door-to-door evangelism. Paul was not setting up house churches or teaching and preaching in houses. Rather, he was evangelizing unconverted Jews and Greeks

Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles, ICC (Edinburgh, Scotland: T&T Clark, 2004), 968.

from house-to-house.¹¹ In other words, he was evangelizing everywhere in public places and in private places. Certainly, there is ample biblical evidences that door-to-door evangelism was used in the Early Church.

Evangelists must keep in mind that there can be great opposition and hostility in evangelism. Somehow evangelists must embrace this reality. It is not about, what happened to them, rather what happened in them that matter the most. When evangelists have this mindset, any opposition is tolerable and any hostility is bearable for the cause of Christ. Not only can violent hostility happens outside the church, but it can happen inside the church, as well.

Chapter 3: Literary Review

I discovered that most of my research authors do no support door-to-door evangelism, but I have also discovered that most of the authors have neither recorded any of their door-to-door experiences, nor have they cited any references to support their unsubstantiated assertions. For these reasons, I do not think they are qualified to make statements, such as door-to-door evangelism is waning.¹² Despite their criticism about door-to-door evangelism, I have gained helpful knowledge from their literary publications. One of the things that had the greatest impact on my experiences was: If

¹¹ Acts 5:42.

¹² Adam Hamilton, *Leading Beyond the Walls: Developing Congregations with a Heart for the Unchurched* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2002), 56. Kirk Hadaway, *Church Growth Principles: Facts from Fiction* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1991).

you want to know something for certain, the best way to know is, to do it yourself. No one can adequately speak for door-to-door evangelism, unless of course, he or she has tried it. Learning from life experiences is one of the greatest teachers of them all. Even when it seems like you are failing in door-to-door evangelism, you are winning, because in Christianity, when you are failing you are actually winning. This is an axiomatic paradox in Christianity. There can be no failing in witnessing for Christ. Because in failing, you are learning: in learning you are winning. Not so much in winning of souls, but winning the lofty prize in Christ Jesus.¹³ In Christianity, Christians are not evaluated by how many souls they have won for Christ: For soul winning is the providence of the God Almighty.¹⁴ Evangelists are required to present the gospel; they are not required to persuade.¹⁵ Evangelists cannot control the uncontrollable. Therefore, they should not worry about being winners of souls or filling up the church's pews. For evangelists cannot win one soul apart from Christ.¹⁶ It is conceivable that evangelists get frustrated with door-to-door evangelism, because at the end of the day, they have not won one soul for Christ. This is faulty thinking. Evangelists can present a compelling gospel message or scripture evidences, yet they still will not persuade. Even the Bible says, "The mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so, and those who are in the flesh cannot please

¹³ Philippians 4:13.

¹⁴ 1 Corinthians 3:6.

¹⁵ Mark 16:15.

¹⁶ John 15:5.

God.”¹⁷ But God says, “I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.”¹⁸ Here is how this works: The Holy Spirit changes the disposition of the heart through persuasion, and then starts weakening their knees through proof. Evangelists’ job is to shut their mouths with proof, but it is God’s job to persuade.

Chapter 4: Project Design

My project was design to test this question: Is door-to door the optimal way to evangelize. In testing my hypothesis, it seems that door-to-door is not the optimal way to evangelize. I have conducted two surveys, and both surveys favored advertisement as the optimal way to evangelize. But, in in the first survey, the door-to-door evangelism came in second place with 32.4%, and advertisement came in first place with 41.2 %. Following advertisement, direct mail came in third place with 15.7%, and telephone came in last place with 10.8%. Still, it is my conclusion that door-to-door evangelism is a great way to evangelize ever creature, despite coming in second place.

Recommendations

I recommend three recommendations. The first one is advertisement. I must research and find out: Why do people think that advertisement is the optimal way to evangelize? How much does it cost to advertise? What is the cheapest, and the most

¹⁷ Romans 8:7.

¹⁸ Ezekiel 36:26.

effective way to evangelize by advertisement? Will advertisement be the effective way to advertise in a new ministry, where money is low and where expenses are high? These are the questions that need to be researched and answered before a new ministry embarks in exorbitant advertisement expenses.

Another recommendation, I would like to research is, can door-to-door evangelism be a legitimate way to determine the sincerity of Christians' faith? In other words, can door-to-door evangelism be a way to evaluate Christians' faith by way of surveying? In the project design chapter, I have asked residents question as a way to evaluated their faith, but I have not returned those results backed to them. The questions that I asked in my survey distributions were question that could not be targeted to an individual, but to a group. In the future, I hope to research ways of allowing individual Christians to evaluate their faith, so he or she will know their strength and weaknesses as Christians.

My final recommendation is, testing advertisement, telephone, door-to-door, and direct mail into different areas to determine if the results are consistently the same. Just because the results were definitive in one area, does not necessary mean that it is definitive in other areas. If there is an apparent inconsistency, then a probe is needed to determine what is the reason for this inconsistency. This inconsistency may be the determinative factor in deciding what is the most effective method of evangelism in different areas.

APPENDIX A

LOST ACCOUNTABILITY LIST

LOST ACCOUNTABILITY LIST		
HOME ADDRESS	QUANTITY	HOME STATUS
1504 Sharpsburg ct.	One person	Not at home
1506 Sharpsburg ct.	One person	No Time
1508 Sharpsburg ct.	One person	Will not open the door
1510 Sharpsburg ct.	One person	Filled out
1514 Sharpsburg ct.	One person	Not home
1500 Sharpsburg ct.	One person	Filled out
1508 Cross Keys ct.	One person	Not home
1504 Cross Keys ct.	One person	Filled out
1506 Cross Keys ct.	One person	Not home
1510 Cross Keys ct.	One person	Filled out
1552 Cross Keys ct.	One person	Not home
1458 Cross Keys ct.	Two persons	Comeback
1520 Honor ct.	One person	Not interested
1527 Honor ct.	One person	Filled out
1525 Honor ct.	One person	Filled out
1528 Honor ct.	One person	Comeback
1523 Honor ct.	One person	Not home
1919 Honor ct.	One person	Filled out
1517 Honor ct.	One person	No Time
1518 Cedar Mountain ct.	One person	Filled out
1522 Cedar Mountain ct.	One person	Filled out
1529 Cedar Mountain ct.	One person	Filled out
1516 Cedar Mountain ct.	One person	Filled out
1414 Cedar Mountain ct.	One person	Not home
1510 Cedar Mountain ct.	One person	Comeback
1506 Cedar Mountain ct.	One person	Not home
1508 Cedar Mountain ct.	One person	Filled out
1500 Cedar Mountain ct.	One person	Not home
1502 Cedar Mountain ct.	One person	Not home
1504 Cedar Mountain ct.	One person	Not home
1534 Cross Keys ct.	One person	Filled out
1530 Cross Keys ct.	One person	Filled out
1518 Cross Keys ct.	Two persons	Filled out
1501 Cross Keys ct.	One person	Not home
1505 Cross Keys ct.	One person	Not home
1507 Cross Keys ct.	One person	Filled out
1515 Honor ct.	One person	Refused
THE COMMUNITY OF STONEWALL MANOR		

APPENDIX B

COMMUNAL SURVEY 1: RANDOM SURVEY

Please circle the number of the answer you wish to select for each question. There are no right or wrong answers; I need your honest opinions. Because this survey is completely anonymous, please do NOT write your name on this form. Thank you, so much for filling out this survey.

1. What do you think is the greatest need in this area?

A. Day care center	C. Church
B. Recreation center	D. Movie theater
2. Are you actively attending any church?

A. Yes	B. No
--------	-------
3. Why do you think most people don't attend church?

A. They don't believe in God	C. Hypocrisy
B. Laziness	D. No one asked them to go
4. If you were to look for a church to attend, what kind of things would you look for?

A. Worship	B. Sound biblical teaching
C. Fellowship	D. Small group ministry
5. Does it bother you for someone to knock on your door to talk about Christianity?

A. Yes	B. No
--------	-------
6. What do you think is the right approach in our community to share the gospel of Christ?

A. Door-to-door	B. Direct mail
C. Telephone	D. Advertisement
7. How much do you know about the Bible?

A. A little bit	B. None
C. A lot	D. Half/ half
8. Would you be interested to know more about God?

A. No	B. Yes.
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APPENDIX C

COMMUNAL SURVEY 2: DOOR-TO-DOOR SURVEY

Hello, I'm James Dabney. I am trying to start a church, and I am looking for ways to effectively serve our community. May we take a moment and get your feedback to a few simple questions?

1. Churches should reach out to people in their community?
 - A. Agree
 - B. Strongly agree
 - C. Undecided
 - D. Agree¹
 - E. Strongly disagree
2. Churches should make significant improvement in its outreach programs?
 - A. Agree
 - B. Strongly agree
 - C. Undecided
 - D. Agree
 - E. Strongly disagree
3. Door-to-door evangelism is the best way to evangelize?
 - A. Agree
 - B. Strongly agree
 - C. Undecided
 - D. Agree
 - E. Strongly disagree
4. Direct mail is the best way to evangelize?
 - A. Agree
 - B. Strongly agree
 - C. Undecided
 - D. Agree
 - E. Strongly disagree

¹The answer for letter D. for each question in this survey should have been "Disagree." This was corrected orally as the survey was administered.

5. Telephone calling is the best way to evangelize?
- A. Agree
 - B. Strongly agree
 - C. Undecided
 - D. Agree
 - E. Strongly disagree
6. Direct mail is the best way to evangelize?
- A. Agree
 - B. Strongly agree
 - C. Undecided
 - F. Agree
 - G. Strongly disagree
7. Churches needs to send their faithful members in the communities to bring new members in their churches?
- A. Agree
 - B. Strongly agree
 - C. Undecided
 - D. Agree
 - E. Strongly disagree
8. Do you mind people trying to share the Gospel with you by knocking on your door?
- A. Yes
 - B. No

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